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List of supplementary items proposed for inclusion in the agenda of the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly*

1. Cooperation between the United Nations and the Collective Security Treaty Organization [item proposed by the Russian Federation (A/64/191)].

2. Sixty-fifth anniversary of the end of the Second World War [item proposed by the Russian Federation (A/64/192)].

3. Observer status for the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region of Africa in the General Assembly [item proposed by Angola, Burundi, the Central African Republic, the Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, Rwanda, the Sudan, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia (A/64/193)].

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Sixty-fourth session
Item 136 of the provisional agenda*
Report on the activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services

Audit of human resources management at the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services

"The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights needs additional delegation of authority in human resources management to improve operational efficiency"

Summary

Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 62/236, the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) conducted an audit of human resources management at the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR).

Historically, OHCHR has had limited delegated authority for human resources management. The Office therefore recently requested the Office of Human Resources Management to provide additional delegation of authority for the recruitment of consultants and temporary staff and for the administration and approval of staff entitlements. However, at the time of the audit, no definitive decision had been made by the Office of Human Resources Management, although OHCHR had strengthened its administrative human resources capacity. OIOS is of the opinion that the existing arrangements are inefficient, resulting in duplication of effort by the United Nations Office at Geneva and OHCHR. OIOS also finds that the current situation has sometimes blurred accountability for management decisions.

* A/64/150.

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Overall, the recruitment of staff in OHCHR was conducted in a fair and competitive manner in terms of the requirements stipulated in ST/AI/2006/3, on the staff selection system. With regard to the recruitment of consultants, however, OIOS found that OHCHR programme managers often relied on informal networks and contacts to source candidates. That practice lacked transparency and contributed to perceptions of bias. OHCHR needs to ensure the competitive selection of consultants by identifying opportunities for such employment on its website and recruiting suitable candidates in a transparent manner.

The average number of days taken to fill OHCHR vacancies during the period from December 2006 to June 2008 was 241, as compared with the goal of 120 days indicated in the OHCHR human resources action plan. Delays in recruitment were caused by both internal and external factors, including delays in pre-screening the large number of applications and the cancellation of a large number of vacancy announcements, which were later reissued. Since February 2008, the Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights has instituted mechanisms to closely monitor the vacancy situation and given top priority to vacancy management.

In the period from 2005 to 2008, OHCHR had opportunities to improve geographical representation during: (a) the post regularization exercise; (b) recruitment arising from the doubling of resources; and (c) recruitment for additional posts to support the universal periodic review of the Human Rights Council. During that period, of the 220 candidates selected by OHCHR, 21 were recruited from unrepresented and underrepresented countries, 65 from overrepresented countries and 134 from countries within the desirable range. As at 31 December 2008, 74 vacant posts were funded by the regular budget and 52 vacant posts were funded by extrabudgetary resources. As such, there continue to be opportunities for further improvement in terms of geographical representation. OIOS is of the opinion that OHCHR needs to develop a strategy to enhance the recruitment of staff from unrepresented and underrepresented countries.

I. Introduction

1. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 62/236, the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) conducted an audit of human resources management at the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR).[1]

2. OHCHR was established by General Assembly resolution 48/141, which mandated the High Commissioner for Human Rights to promote and protect the enjoyment and full realization by all people of all rights established in the Charter of the United Nations and in international human rights instruments. The priorities of OHCHR are based on the 2005 Plan of Action, transformed into two-year strategic management plans. In the High Commissioner's second strategic management plan for 2008-2009, key priorities relate to greater country engagement, working closely with regional, country and local partners for the implementation of human rights on the ground, strengthening the leadership role of the High Commissioner, improving partnerships with civil society and United Nations agencies and improving synergy with human rights bodies.

3. In the context of its recent growth, OHCHR has undertaken three major recruitment initiatives since 2005: a post regularization exercise; the doubling of resources efforts; and an increase in staff to support the universal periodic review. In the period from June 2005 to February 2006, 119 short-term posts were regularized, mainly to end the practice of employing long-serving staff on short-term contracts. During the biennium 2006-2007, the General Assembly authorized 80 new posts under the regular budget in the Professional and higher categories, so that by November 2007, OHCHR staff exceeded 920, with more than half located in the 11 country and 9 regional offices. Subsequently, the budget for the biennium 2008-2009 proposed an additional 36 new posts, including 26 in the Professional category to support the universal periodic review.

4. The objectives of the audit were to assess the adequacy and effectiveness of internal controls in human resources management at OHCHR, including compliance with relevant United Nations staff regulations and rules pertaining to the recruitment of staff and consultants.

II. Delegation of authority in administrative areas of human resources management

5. In his report on accountability and responsibility (A/55/270), the Secretary-General stated that in order to be held accountable for discharging their responsibilities, managers needed authority and control over their human and financial resources, timely and accurate information about the status of resources assigned to them, and training as required.

6. The human resources management functions of OHCHR were limited to vacancy management, evaluation of applicants and recommendation of selected candidates based upon approval by the central review bodies. OHCHR did not have

[1] Para. 101 of resolution 62/236 requested a comprehensive review of human resources management in the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the efficiency of the implementation of its mandate. The present report addresses the first part of the request; a separate report (A/64/203) addresses the second part.

the authority to approve personnel actions. The United Nations Office at Geneva had responsibility for oversight and approval of actions related to human resources management pertaining to OHCHR, as well as other Geneva-based offices.

7. In February 2006, citing the planned increase in its administrative capacity, OHCHR requested the Office of Human Resources Management to grant it delegation of authority for the recruitment of consultants and temporary staff subject to the 300 series of the Staff Rules and for the administration and approval of staff entitlements. In May 2006, the Office responded to the initial request, taking note of the efforts made by OHCHR to build up capacity. The Office of Human Resources Management indicated that it would grant the request upon the establishment of increased administrative capacity at OHCHR, with consideration given to the capacity of the United Nations Office at Geneva as a provider of administrative services for all Geneva-based offices. Subsequently, OHCHR strengthened its Human Resources Management Section by appointing, in March 2007, a Chief of Section at the P-5 level, which brought the staff capacity of the Section to five Professional and seven General Service staff members and one Junior Professional Officer. In contrast, the United Nations Office at Geneva had only one human resources officer and two assistants to service OHCHR, with one assistant handling all consultants for agencies serviced by the Geneva Office. In June 2007, OHCHR reiterated its request, but no definitive decision was undertaken on the matter by the Office of Human Resources Management.

8. The existing delegation of authority resulted in inefficient operations, as set out below:

(a) There was duplication of work between the United Nations Office at Geneva and OHCHR. According to the memorandum of understanding between the parties, OHCHR is responsible for the accuracy and completeness of information submitted and entered into the Integrated Management Information System (IMIS), as well as other information sent to the United Nations Office at Geneva. OHCHR is considered the certifying office and the United Nations Office at Geneva the approving office. The Human Resources Management Section of OHCHR gathered, reviewed and entered the required information into IMIS and submitted relevant documentation to the Human Resources Management Service of the United Nations Office at Geneva for approval. The Financial Resources Management Service of the United Nations Office at Geneva then reviewed the transactions in IMIS and made disbursements. In view of the increased administrative capacity established at OHCHR, the existing procedures could be streamlined by giving approval authority to OHCHR, with the Financial Resources Management Service conducting the final review during the disbursement of payments;

(b) Accountability for OHCHR human resources management decisions was sometimes blurred. While OHCHR has programme and budgetary responsibility, its human-resources-related actions were approved by the United Nations Office at Geneva. This resulted in conflicts regarding the requirements and responsibility for carrying out certain functions, such as background checks of consultants. Further delegation of authority to OHCHR would clearly place accountability and responsibility for such actions with OHCHR. The human resources action plan, a tool used by the Office of Human Resources Management to monitor activities related to human resources management throughout the Secretariat, provides a viable mechanism to monitor the exercise of the delegation of authority by a

department of the Secretariat. In addition, the Office of Human Resources Management could regularly review and monitor personnel actions to ensure compliance with the Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations. OIOS is of the view that OHCHR should pursue with the Office of Human Resources Management its case for additional delegation of authority, in accordance with the report of the Secretary-General on accountability and responsibility (A/55/270).

III. Vacancy management

9. As at 31 December 2008, there were 74 vacant regular budget posts and 52 vacant extrabudgetary posts. According to the United Nations Office at Geneva, the average number of days taken to fill OHCHR vacancies (i.e., the number of days from the issuance of the vacancy announcement to the date of the selection decision by the head of department) during the period from December 2006 to June 2008 was 241 days, as against the goal of 120 days indicated in the OHCHR human resources action plan for 2007-2008. OHCHR had expressed its concerns to the Office of Human Resources Management regarding the goal of 120 days and the difficulty that it would have in meeting it, largely as a result of organizational growth. OHCHR noted that the goal of 120 days had been established on the basis of the assumption that the vast majority of candidates selected by a department would be internal candidates, which would considerably reduce recruitment time. OHCHR also attributed recruitment delays to both internal and external factors, including delays in pre-screening the high number of applicants and changes in staffing field offices owing to Government decisions.

10. The cancellation of vacancies contributed to delays in the recruitment process. The number of vacancy announcements cancelled in the period from the beginning of 2004 to June 2008 was 113. Most of these were cancelled in 2006 (48 cancellations) and 2007 (39 cancellations). Vacancies were cancelled and re-advertised for a number of reasons, including (a) changes in country agreements; (b) selected candidates declining the offer of appointment; (c) the revision of a vacancy announcement or the reclassification of posts; and (d) disagreement between OHCHR and the central review bodies on the candidates recommended.

11. Since February 2008, the Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights has monitored the status of vacancies and conducted monthly meetings to review recruitment actions, which have been followed by discussions with the senior management team. Thus, it appears that the leadership of OHCHR has made vacancy management a top priority.

IV. Staff recruitment process

12. Overall, OIOS found that OHCHR had conducted a fair and competitive recruitment process and adhered to the requirements of ST/AI/2006/3, on the staff selection system. At the time of the audit, the recruitment of additional staff for field offices and to support the universal periodic review was in progress.

13. The vacancy announcements pertaining to OHCHR resulted in a large number of applications. The United Nations Office at Geneva sometimes had to pre-screen thousands of applicants for an advertised post. Inadequate pre-screening of

applicants in the Galaxy system often resulted in the release of unqualified applicants and, in some instances, the omission of qualified candidates. Programme case officers in OHCHR had to review more than 250 applicants per vacancy, which extended the recruitment period.

14. The interpretation of evaluation criteria by OHCHR programme case officers and the members of the central review bodies also contributed to delays in the recruitment process. The central review bodies sometimes went beyond reviewing process regularity to scrutinize an individual candidate's qualifications. That situation resulted in disagreements, primarily as a result of differences in opinion regarding interpretation of the evaluation criteria, candidates' qualifications, terminology or semantics and when determining the number or type of years of work experience of the recommended candidates. When the central review bodies and OHCHR could not resolve such cases, they were submitted to the Office of Human Resources Management for a decision, causing further delays. OIOS is of the view that the Office of Human Resources Management should further clarify the respective focus of the central review bodies and the programme case officers' roles with regard to the selection process.

V. Geographical representation

15. The General Assembly and the Human Rights Council have, on a number of occasions, directed OHCHR to improve geographical representation. OHCHR, with the guidance and approval of the Office of Human Resources Management, put in place temporary recruitment measures to help address the geographical imbalance. Although those measures helped to address the imbalance in geographical representation at OHCHR, representation from unrepresented or underrepresented countries needed further improvement. In the period from 2005 to 2008, OHCHR had opportunities to improve geographical representation during: (a) the post regularization exercise; (b) recruitment arising from the doubling of resources; and (c) recruitment for the additional posts to support the universal periodic review of the Human Rights Council. During that period, of the 220 candidates selected by OHCHR, 21 were recruited from unrepresented and underrepresented countries, 65 from overrepresented countries and 134 from countries within the desirable range. The table below shows the results of those exercises, as well as the overall geographical representation of staff at OHCHR.

Geographical distribution of recruits — 2005 to 2008 by number and percentage

	2005-2006 regularization		*2006-2007 doubling of resources*		*2008 universal periodic review*		*Overall staffing at OHCHR as at 31 December 2008*	
Recruits from:	*No.*	*Percentage*	*No.*	*Percentage*	*No.*	*Percentage*	*No.*	*Percentage*
Overrepresented countries	38	32	22	28	5	23	61	19
Unrepresented or underrepresented countries	11	9	6	8	4	18	22	7
Countries within desirable range	70	59	51	64	13	59	234	74
Total	**119**		**79**		**22**		**317**	

16. In the post regularization exercise, staff members who had served OHCHR for at least two years under a temporary appointment as at 30 November 2002 were considered as eligible at the 30-day mark, rather than at the 60-day mark, under the provisions of ST/AI/2006/3, on the staff selection system. As shown in the table, 9 per cent of the applicants were selected from unrepresented or underrepresented countries, 32 per cent from overrepresented countries and 59 per cent from countries within the desirable range. Under the recruitment for posts in the doubling of resources exercise, of the 80 posts authorized for the biennium 2006-2007, OHCHR filled 79, decreasing recruitment from overrepresented countries by 4 per cent, marginally decreasing recruitment from unrepresented or underrepresented countries and increasing recruitment from countries within the desirable range. As at 30 November 2008, the result of the recruitment exercise for additional posts for the universal periodic review showed a decrease in recruitment from overrepresented countries, an increase from unrepresented or underrepresented countries and a decrease from countries within the desirable range.

17. In order to improve geographical representation, OHCHR would need to develop a strategy to enhance the recruitment of staff from unrepresented and underrepresented countries. OHRM should provide guidance towards that end.

VI. Recruitment of consultants

A. Earlier planning and identification of the need for consultants could reduce the impact of delays in recruitment

18. OHCHR requested the United Nations Office at Geneva to process 184 consultants' contracts in 2007 and 86 in the first half of 2008, amounting to $1.4 million and $0.744 million, respectively. The average number of days taken by OHCHR and the United Nations Office at Geneva to process a consultancy contract, from formal submission of requests to the substantive offices to final approval by the Geneva Office, was 30 days in 2007 and 26 days in 2008. OHCHR staff reported having invested a significant amount of time in obtaining the necessary documentation from the branches before being able to submit the formally signed requests to the United Nations Office at Geneva. Owing to the lack of reliable data, OHCHR could not quantify the time between identifying the need for consultants and formally submitting requests. However, OHCHR staff reported that the submission of incomplete documentation by OHCHR substantive offices resulted in longer lead times in recruiting consultants. Nonetheless, the introduction by the United Nations Office at Geneva of more standardized documentation, checklists and procedures for use by both OHCHR and the Geneva Office reduced the processing time for formal requests in 2008. Failure to contract consultants on time increased the risk of delay in project implementation and contributed to reduced compliance with rules regarding the employment of consultants, such as starting work without a contract having been signed. OHCHR could reduce the impact of the delays in recruiting consultants by requiring programme managers to start the process of recruiting consultants sufficiently early — from the time that the need for their services was identified. This would ensure that the consultants were deployed in a timely manner.

B. Competition and transparency in recruiting consultants should be enhanced

19. ST/AI/1999/7 requires that departments and offices consider several qualified candidates for each assignment, and that the central roster of candidates being developed by the Office of Human Resources Management be used for sourcing candidates as soon as it is operational. OIOS found that such a central roster had yet to be established. Instead, OHCHR programme managers often relied on their personal networks to identify consultants. Those networks were made up of former staff, interns, non-governmental organizations or other contacts. Such contacts were not usually shared within OHCHR but were known to individual staff within a particular division. This practice lacked transparency and contributed to perceptions of bias.

20. The selection process for consultants was tedious, often resulted in tension between OHCHR and the United Nations Office at Geneva regarding the candidates' qualifications and was perceived by the Geneva Office as favouring certain consultants or individual contractors. OIOS noted that OHCHR advertised some employment opportunities on its website. The notification of employment opportunities could be expanded to include consultants and short-term staff. Jobs governed by the 200 series of the Staff Rules advertised on the OHCHR website provided a detailed description of duties and responsibilities. OHCHR needs to ensure the competitive selection of consultants by instituting a similar practice, especially for technical experts.

21. ST/AI/1999/7 requires that, prior to the issuance of a contract, the processing office shall verify the academic and professional credentials of the candidate recommended for selection. OHCHR staff believed that that was the responsibility of the Human Resources Management Service of the United Nations Office at Geneva, whereas the latter believed that it was the responsibility of OHCHR. As such, it was not always evident that background checks were conducted. OIOS is of the opinion that it would be more appropriate for the office in need of technical service or expertise to conduct the background or reference checks as part of the assessment of candidates prior to recommending the selected candidate.

VII. Recommendations

Recommendation 1

22. OHCHR should pursue its case with the Office of Human Resources Management for additional delegation of authority in matters relating to human resources management.

23. *OHCHR accepted recommendation 1, stating that it would pursue with the Office of Human Resources Management the issue of the additional delegation of authority for human resources management and that a review of the issue was already under way in the light of the new staff selection system. The Office of Human Resources Management indicated that it had reviewed, within the context of the human resources management reform effort, the delegation of authority to heads of departments, offices away from Headquarters/regional commissions/tribunals, including to the heads of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs,*

the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and OHCHR. The Office of Human Resources Management confirmed that it would delegate authority to OHCHR for the recruitment and authorization of consultants and individual contractors as well as for other human resources areas, in accordance with established regulations, rules and procedures. The Chief of the Human Resources Management Service of the United Nations Office at Geneva would arrange the necessary training and standard operating procedures in order for the relevant OHCHR staff to assume that responsibility.

Recommendation 2

24. The Human Resources Management Service of the United Nations Office at Geneva should further clarify the respective focus of the central review bodies and of the programme case officers' roles with regard to the selection process.

25. *OHCHR stated that it would raise the issue with the United Nations Office at Geneva.*

Recommendation 3

26. OHCHR, in consultation with the Office of Human Resources Management, should develop a strategy to enhance the recruitment of staff from unrepresented and underrepresented countries.

27. *OHCHR stated that it had a specific target in its human resources action plan for the recruitment of staff from unrepresented and underrepresented countries. The High Commissioner's efforts towards improving geographical representation showed that OHCHR had surpassed by about 9 per cent its 20 per cent geographical recruitment target for 2007 and 2008. The Office of Human Resources Management indicated that it would consult with OHCHR to assess the situation and develop a strategy to enhance the recruitment of staff from unrepresented and underrepresented countries.*

Recommendation 4

28. OHCHR should further reduce the impact of delays in recruiting consultants by starting the recruitment process sufficiently early, from the time the need for such services is identified.

29. *OHCHR accepted recommendation 4, stating that progress needed to be made in reducing the delays in recruiting consultants through better enforcement of the deadlines set for the submission by managers of requests for consultants. In addition, OHCHR noted that the nature of its work was such that there would always be occasions when unplanned needs arose that had to be met at very short notice.*

Recommendation 5

30. OHCHR should ensure the competitive selection of consultants by notifying opportunities for such employment on its website.

31. *OHCHR did not accept recommendation 5, stating that it was following rules set out in ST/AI/1999/7 and did not believe that advertising opportunities for consultants on the OHCHR website would add any value at this stage. It indicated, however, that it would review the recommendation, depending on how the development of the roster of consultants proceeded. OHCHR had been working with the United Nations Office at Geneva to develop a central roster of consultants, which it intended to use when finalized and operational. OHCHR also noted that it had made strides in improving both gender and geographical diversity of its consultants, as attested by its human resources action plan.* In the opinion of OIOS, the posting of opportunities for consultants' services on the OHCHR website could extend the reach of OHCHR to potential qualified consultants and improve competition. OIOS therefore reiterates recommendation 5, and requests OHCHR to reconsider its initial position on the matter.

Recommendation 6

32. OHCHR should clarify with the Human Resources Management Service of the United Nations Office at Geneva the responsibility for consultants' reference checks.

33. *OHCHR accepted recommendation 6, stating that it would raise the issue with the United Nations Office at Geneva. In practice, programme managers in many cases carried out informal reference checks of consultancies under consideration, and the decision on which consultant to recommend was based partly on such reference checks.*

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Item 55 (d), (e) and (f) of the provisional agenda*

Sustainable development: Protection of global climate for present and future generations

Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa

Convention on Biological Diversity

Implementation of United Nations environmental conventions

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the General Assembly the reports submitted by the secretariats of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa and the Convention on Biological Diversity.

* A/64/150.

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I. Report of the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change on the United Nations Climate Change Conference, Poznan, 2008, and its follow-up

A. Introduction

1. The General Assembly, in its resolution 63/32, invited the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change[1] to report to it at its sixty-fourth session on the work of the Conference of the Parties. The present report is submitted in response to that invitation.

B. Outcomes of the fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention and of the fourth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol

1. Summary

2. The United Nations Climate Change Conference was held in Poznan, Poland, from 1 to 12 December 2008. The Conference marked the halfway point on the road to Copenhagen and was described as an important "bridge from Bali to Copenhagen". It included the following:

(a) Fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change;

(b) Fourth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol;[2]

(c) Fourth session of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention;

(d) Resumed sixth session of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Further Commitments for Annex I Parties under the Kyoto Protocol;

(e) Twenty-ninth session of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation;

(f) Twenty-ninth session of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice.

The Conference of the Parties adopted seven formal decisions and the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol adopted six decisions. These decisions will help to promote progress towards a broader agreement at Copenhagen.

3. While the 2007 United Nations Climate Change Conference in Bali was influenced by the release of the fourth assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and a sense of urgency to act on climate change, the

[1] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1771, No. 30822.

[2] The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change has been ratified to date by 192 parties, and the Kyoto Protocol has been ratified by 187 parties.

Poznan Conference coincided with the financial crisis and the beginning of an economic downturn, leading to concerns that action on climate might fall victim to the crisis. In spite of this, the message that emerged from Poznan was one of progress on climate change issues and for an economic recovery that develops green investment strategies and achieves green growth.

4. Thus, the success of the Poznan Conference was to maintain progress on the road to Copenhagen against the backdrop of a global economic downturn and, remarkably, to agree on work programmes for both of the Ad Hoc Working Groups for the year 2009, which includes three additional sessions this year. Other achievements included adoption of the Poznan strategic programme on technology transfer and the full operationalization of the Adaptation Fund. These measures provide insights into possible governance architecture that a Copenhagen outcome could achieve.

5. Poznan further highlighted the importance of meeting the objectives laid out by the Bali road map processes. One of the objectives is to bridge the gap between the emission reductions required by science and those considered to be economically, technically and politically possible. An important focus of this discussion was to consider "a shared vision for long-term cooperative action" under the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention.

6. Most importantly, the deliberations in Poznan resulted in a realization that success in Copenhagen is dependent on achieving clarity on:

(a) Emission reduction targets for industrialized countries;

(b) Nationally appropriate mitigation actions by developing countries;

(c) New and additional financial resources and access to adequate and predictable financing;

(d) Institutional structures including governance structures that are founded in equity.

2. Progress in negotiations towards Copenhagen

7. In Poznan, it became evident that the Copenhagen outcome needed to provide a long-term framework for setting the long-term ambitions of both developed and developing countries. The development of such a long-term global goal for emission reductions was highlighted as a key aspect of a "shared vision", and the parties discussed this at a workshop of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention and an informal ministerial round table organized by the President of the fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties. In 2009, the parties will continue to discuss and gain an understanding of this important element.

8. In advancing the Bali Action Plan, the fourth session of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention adopted conclusions on its work programme for the year 2009 and agreed to shift into full negotiating mode. In doing so, the Ad Hoc Working Group invited its Chair to prepare a document for consideration at its fifth session to further focus the negotiating process on the fulfilment of the Bali Action Plan and the components of the agreed outcome to be adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its fifteenth session. To

achieve this goal, the Ad Hoc Working Group agreed that this document would encompass all aspects of the Bali Action Plan in a balanced manner, including a negotiating text. The fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties welcomed the progress made by the Ad Hoc Working Group and its determination to shift into full negotiating mode in 2009. It also welcomed the invitation to the parties to provide further proposals to review and assess the scope and progress of negotiations at the sixth session of the Ad Hoc Working Group, to be held in June 2009.

9. In 2009, the Ad Hoc Working Group convened at its fifth and sixth sessions. At its fifth session, held from 29 March to 8 April 2009, the Chair introduced the focus document requested of him in Poznan. At its sixth session, held from 1 to 12 June 2009, the Chair presented a negotiating text, which was accepted by the parties as a starting point for the negotiations. The parties conducted readings of the text, which resulted in a revised negotiating text that will be considered in further meetings in the second half of this year. At the same session, the Chair also convened informal consultations that resulted in a useful exchange of views on the legal form or forms of the agreed outcome, and provided an opportunity for clarification of procedural aspects. Finally, five parties made formal proposals for a protocol under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change pursuant to article 17 of the Convention.

10. In 2007, the open-ended Ad Hoc Working Group on Further Commitments for Annex I Parties under the Kyoto Protocol agreed to forward the results of its work to the fifth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol with a view to their adoption. To this end, at Poznan, the Ad Hoc Working Group adopted a work programme that outlines all issues to be considered in its work through to Copenhagen. These issues include the scale of emission reductions to be achieved by Annex I Parties in aggregate and individually; emissions trading and the project-based mechanisms; land use, land-use change and forestry; and a number of technical and methodological issues. The Group also requested its Chair to develop two notes, one on possible elements for amendments, pursuant to article 3, paragraph 9, of the Kyoto Protocol; and one on possible elements of a text relating to issues outlined in the report of its resumed sixth session.

11. This year, the Ad Hoc Working Group has held its seventh and eighth sessions. At its seventh session, held from 29 March to 8 April 2009, the Group considered the notes referred to above. With a view to intensifying its work, the Group requested its Chair to prepare a proposal for amendments to the Kyoto Protocol pursuant to its article 3, paragraph 9; and a text on other issues outlined in the report on its resumed sixth session. The eighth session of the Ad Hoc Working Group took place from 1 to 12 June 2009. The Group considered the two documents prepared by the Chair and ensured that these correctly reflected the proposals by parties. A number of parties also submitted formal proposals for amendments to be communicated six months before their adoption, in accordance with articles 20, paragraph 2, and 21, paragraph 3, of the Kyoto Protocol.

3. Progress on ongoing implementation

12. The progress made in the aforementioned negotiations is closely linked to efforts to advance the ongoing implementation of the Convention and the Kyoto

Protocol. These implementation efforts also help to lay the groundwork for enhanced action on climate change. Some of these measures have been identified below.

13. A significant achievement of the Poznan Conference was the adoption of the "Poznan strategic programme on technology transfer" of the Global Environment Facility. The programme was initiated in response to the request of the Conference of the Parties at its thirteenth session, held in Bali, and is a first step towards scaling up the level of investment for technology transfer to help developing countries address their needs for environmentally sound technologies. To this end, a programme was recently launched to provide $60 million in financing for technology transfer projects submitted by developing countries and to support the conduct and update of their technology needs assessments.

14. Another important decision made in Poznan was when the fourth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol adopted the strategic priorities, policies and guidelines of the Adaptation Fund and agreed that the Adaptation Fund Board should be conferred the legal capacity to enable eligible parties to access resources from the Adaptation Fund. Thus, the fourth session was able to put finishing touches on the Adaptation Fund under the Kyoto Protocol, thereby enabling the Fund, in the course of 2009, to finance concrete adaptation projects and programmes in developing countries that are parties to the Kyoto Protocol. The funding for projects and programmes will be available at national, regional and community levels.

15. The Expert Group on Technology Transfer also presented three interim reports on performance indicators, financing options and a long-term strategy to facilitate the development, deployment, diffusion and transfer of technologies under the Convention. The overall objective of this work, and that of the work on performance indicators in general, is associated with an agreed outcome in the context of the Group's review and assessment of the effectiveness of the implementation of article 4, paragraph 1 (c) of the Convention and with the work of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention.

16. Work progressed at the twenty-ninth session of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice on the issue of reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation. The Subsidiary Body recommended a programme of work on methodological issues related to a range of policy approaches and positive incentives to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries. This work on methodological issues is to be completed with a recommendation for a draft decision to be adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its fifteenth session. Work is also progressing under the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention, which is considering policy approaches and positive incentives to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation and related issues, as part of wider negotiations to reach an agreed outcome in Copenhagen.

17. Activities under the Nairobi work programme on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change are ongoing and, since Poznan, the implementation of the programme has been in full swing. Continuous efforts to engage stakeholders have resulted in the addition of 11 new organizations, bringing the total number of partner organizations to 133 (as at 1 May 2009), and the receipt of 21 action pledges made by 14 organizations, for a total of 82 pledges. The activities undertaken by

these organizations has furthered the understanding of scientific and technical knowledge under the nine areas of the Nairobi work programme and thus contributed to efforts to make informed decisions on adaptation. The broad support and interest of parties in the Nairobi work programme as a knowledge-sharing and learning mechanism on global adaptation is evident from the discussions of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention. Activities catalysed, as well as knowledge and information generated through the Nairobi work programme, are particularly relevant to the two areas of work under the Ad Hoc Working Group: climate-related risks and extreme events; and adaptation planning and practices. The Group stands to gain valuable experience from the progress made in the implementation of the Nairobi work programme.

18. With regard to capacity-building in developing countries under the Convention, the Conference of the Parties requested the Subsidiary Body for Implementation to prepare a draft decision on the outcome of the second comprehensive review of the capacity-building framework in accordance with the agreed terms of reference for that review. An important objective of the second comprehensive review is to take stock of progress in, and assess the effectiveness of, the implementation of capacity-building activities directly relating to the capacity-building framework. This draft decision is to take into account deliberations at the thirtieth session of the Subsidiary Body (June 2009) on further steps to regularly monitor and evaluate capacity-building activities. The Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention is also considering capacity-building in its draft negotiating text as a pertinent cross-cutting issue and an essential means of implementation, together with financial resources and technology, to support enhanced action on mitigation and adaptation in developing countries.

19. The second review of the Kyoto Protocol pursuant to its article 9 was conducted at the fourth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, in accordance with the decision taken at its second session, held in Nairobi. The fourth session was unable to reach an agreement on this review, however, and concluded its work without adopting a decision.

20. The fourth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol recognized the rapidly expanding portfolio of clean development mechanism project activities. By Poznan, the mechanism had registered a total of 1,186 project activities, bringing the total number of certified emission reductions to 202,845,016. The projects that entered the mechanism pipeline in 2006 will result in an estimated $25 billion in capital investment. The mechanism has thus provided an important source of investment and financial flows for mitigation in developing countries. The mechanism has also made an important contribution to the Adaptation Fund through the 2 per cent levy on mechanism project activities. In giving further guidance on the mechanism, the fourth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol provided an overall strategic framework for increasing its efficiency and responding to the many specific requests made under this framework, and requested the Executive Board of the clean development mechanism to report back to the fifth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol on the actions taken and with recommendations for building upon or changing the guidance previously given to the Board.

21. With respect to equitable regional and subregional distribution of clean development mechanism project activities, the parties emphasized the need for further efforts by enhancing capacity-building and streamlining the process for least developed countries, small island developing States and Africa. The Nairobi Framework, a multi-agency initiative that focuses on capacity-building for the mechanism, has made some notable progress. Last year the partner agencies presented a new joint programme proposal to scale up activities to catalyse the mechanism in Africa, the implementation of which depends on the availability of funds.

22. The implementation of the Convention continues, with 134 developing countries having submitted their initial national communications, 10 their second national communications and 1 their third national communications. In addition, 121 developing countries are presently preparing their second national communications, which will include information relating to greenhouse gas inventories, vulnerability and adaptation assessments and mitigation analysis. Industrialized countries (Annex I Parties) were requested to submit their fourth national communications to the secretariat by 1 January 2006. As at 14 July 2009, 40 out of 41 Annex I Parties had submitted their fourth national communication.

23. As at 14 July 2009, 41 out of the 48 least developed countries had submitted their national adaptation programmes of action identifying priority activities that respond to their urgent and immediate needs with regard to adaptation to the adverse effects of climate change.

24. The fourth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol also requested the secretariat to establish and maintain an international transaction log in order to verify the validity of transactions on Kyoto Protocol units. A total of 35 Annex B Party registries and the clean development mechanism registry are connected to the log, which ensures the integrity of 58 billion Kyoto Protocol units and has processed 170,000 transactions as at 24 July 2009.

4. High-level segment

25. The joint high-level segment of the fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties and the fourth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol was opened by the President of the Conference of the Parties. The high-level segment was also addressed by the President of Poland, the President of Guyana, the Prime Minister of Tuvalu, the Prime Minister of Sweden, the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

26. The Secretary-General reiterated his commitment that the United Nations system would provide assistance to parties in every way possible and promised to support parties throughout the negotiating period and to help implement the outcomes.

5. Conclusions and recommendations

27. **The General Assembly may wish to:**

(a) **Take note of the report of the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, as transmitted by the Secretary-General;**

(b) **Note the outcomes of the fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention and of the fourth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, hosted by the Government of Poland from 1 to 12 December 2008;**

(c) **Pledge its support to the negotiating processes under the Bali road map and encourage progress towards reaching an agreed outcome in Copenhagen;**

(d) **Invite the Executive Secretary to continue to report to it on the work of the Conference.**

II. Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 63/218 and the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa

A. Introduction

1. In its resolution 63/218, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report to it at its sixty-fourth session on the implementation of that resolution, including a report on the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa. The present report constitutes an update to the Assembly on the principal activities that have been undertaken since the adoption of the resolution, including on the implementation of the Convention.

B. Implementation of resolution 63/218, including the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa

1. Background

2. In its resolution 63/218, the General Assembly reaffirmed its resolve to support and strengthen the implementation of the Convention, taking into account the ten-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention (2008-2018), with a view to addressing the causes of desertification and land degradation, and invited all parties, the secretariat of the Convention and other institutions and supporting bodies to cooperate and coordinate their activities for a successful implementation of the strategic plan. It also invited all parties to report on progress made in the implementation of the strategic plan. The Assembly also invited developed-country parties to the Convention and other Governments, multilateral organizations, the private sector and other relevant organizations to make resources available to affected developing countries for the implementation of the Convention. The Assembly also extended its support to the efforts of the Executive Secretary to bring about the administrative renewal and reform of the secretariat and to realign its functions in order to fully implement the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit and bring them into line with the strategic plan to enhance the implementation of the Convention. The Assembly further noted the request made by the eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Joint Inspection Unit to conduct an assessment of the Global Mechanism of the Convention and submit it to the ninth session of the Conference of the Parties and looked forward to the findings of the Unit.

3. Further, the Assembly invited the Executive Secretary, in coordination with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations secretariat, to actively prepare for and participate in the seventeenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development with a view to ensuring that the core issues of the

Convention, in particular those relating to land degradation, drought and desertification, were duly considered in the context of sustainable development during the deliberations of the policy session.

2. Ten-year strategic plan and its implementation

Context

4. The ten-year strategic plan was the final outcome of an extensive process which originated at the sixth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, held in Havana in 2003 and was adopted by the eighth session of the Conference of the Parties, held in Madrid in 2007.

5. While parties have a leading role in implementing the strategic plan, the secretariat has worked to create the necessary conditions for the successful implementation of the strategic plan by, inter alia: (a) developing a reporting and review system based on impact indicators for the strategic objectives and performance indicators for the operational objectives; (b) undertaking a corporate review/reform process involving the move by the bodies and institutions of the Convention to results-based management and related programming and budgeting; (c) reshaping the operations of the Committee on Science and Technology; (d) reviewing the terms of reference of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention; (e) reviewing modalities for regional coordination mechanisms; (f) developing guidelines for the participation of civil society in Convention processes; (g) creating a comprehensive communications strategy; and (h) helping to align action programmes with the strategic plan.

3. Seventh session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention and first special session of the Committee on Science and Technology

6. The seventh session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention was held in Istanbul, Turkey, back-to-back with the first special session of the Committee on Science and Technology, from 3 to 14 November 2008.

Seventh session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention

7. At the seventh session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention, which immediately followed the first special session of the Committee on Science and Technology, delegates agreed on reporting principles that would measure progress in the implementation of the Convention. Through the analysis of performance and impact indicators, affected countries and development partners would understand what does and does not work in implementing the Convention. In this respect, assessments of national capacity to implement the new reporting system would be conducted in all regions in order to design a comprehensive capacity-building approach.

8. The new reporting format would provide opportunities for affected country parties to address their successes and constraints in implementing the Convention and the strategic plan. For developed country parties, future reporting would focus on providing information on the extent to which the Convention has been mainstreamed into their development cooperation strategies.

9. Another significant step was the concrete proposal to strengthen the integration of civil society organizations into the review process.

10. Important deliberations also took place with regard to the review and monitoring system, the subsidiary bodies and institutions assisting the process, as well as the format of future meetings of the Committee. The main institutional and procedural reforms required by the ten-year strategic plan were outlined in Istanbul, and are to be completed and put into action at the ninth session of the Conference of the Parties.

First special session of the Committee on Science and Technology

11. At the first special session of the Committee on Science and Technology, its members took significant steps to address the scientific problems within the Convention process. In this regard, the Committee identified the steps necessary to select a minimum set of impact indicators to measure progress on strategic objectives 1, 2 and 3 of the strategic plan. These impact indicators are to create a common standard that would make analysis feasible at the national and global levels, which would also increase the effectiveness of the implementation of the Convention.

12. Delegates confirmed that the participation of national science and technology correspondents in the activities of the Committee would enhance its work. The Committee carried out a global consultation of affected parties, through their national focal points and correspondents, on currently utilized impact indicators to be used as a reference for the selection of the minimum set of impact indicators. The recommended set of impact indicators would be discussed during the scientific segment of the regional meetings and submitted to the ninth session of the Conference of the Parties for consideration.

13. The ninth session of the Committee will be held on the margins of the ninth session of the Conference of the Parties and under its auspices the First Scientific Conference will be organized by the selected consortium, in collaboration with the secretariat of the Convention and under the lead of the Bureau of the Committee. The selected theme of the conference is "Biophysical and socio-economic monitoring and assessment of desertification and land degradation to support decision-making in land and water management". The new scientific and technical conference-style format of the Committee is aimed at improving the flow of scientific knowledge into the Convention's processes. By providing an interface with the global science community, the Committee will produce sound scientific outputs and policy-oriented recommendations to inform policy formulation and dialogue at the Conference of the Parties.

4. Partnership agreements

14. The secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa has been actively exploring partnerships and collaboration with agencies such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). To this end, a corporate retreat was organized in Bonn on 4 and 5 June 2009, with the participation of senior staff from both organizations and hosted by the Convention secretariat. The objective of the retreat was to build common ground and a corporate framework for partnerships to combat desertification and land degradation and to mitigate the effects of drought. As a

result of the retreat, the Convention secretariat and UNDP have agreed to establish a strategic working partnership, motivated by the urgent need to draw attention to and catalyse international cooperation to address the needs of the 1 billion poorest people living in the drylands, in particular under scenarios of climate change. This partnership will build on the complementarities and respective comparative advantages of the two institutions. UNDP and the Convention secretariat have agreed to collaborate on a range of programmatic actions with the overall aim of reducing poverty by enhancing ecosystem functions and services in the drylands.

5. Assessment of the Global Mechanism of the Convention by the Joint Inspection Unit

15. As mandated by the Conference of the Parties, the Joint Inspection Unit conducted a review entitled "Assessment of the Global Mechanism of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification". This mandate was carried out from January to June 2009. The report has recently been issued and will be considered by the ninth session of the Conference of the Parties for appropriate action.

6. Synergies between the three Rio Conventions

16. The Executive Secretary participated actively in the ninth meeting of the Joint Liaison Group of the three Rio Conventions. The meeting was held in the Joint Liaison Office of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and the Convention on Biological Diversity in New York on 14 May on the sidelines of the seventeenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development. The Executive Secretaries of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change also participated in the meeting. The Executive Secretary of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification briefed the Group on recent activities, including the adoption of the ten-year strategic plan by the eighth session of the Conference of the Parties, the seventh session of the Committee for the Review of Implementation of the Convention, the first special session of the Committee on Science and Technology, as well as the first and second meetings of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Harmonized Reporting. He also briefed the group on the Convention initiative to organize a Land Day event on 6 June 2009 on the margins of the climate change talks in Bonn in order to provide a forum for interface between climate change negotiators and stakeholders concerned with land issues. He also drew attention to the need for work, at least on a pilot basis, on joint implementation of national action programmes under the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in some countries in an effort to demonstrate joint action by the Rio Conventions and respond to calls from parties for greater synergies, particularly at the national level.

7. The seventeenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development and its preparatory processes

17. As mandated by both the Conference of the Parties and the United Nations General Assembly, the secretariat of the Convention and the Executive Secretary participated actively in the deliberations of the seventeenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, which convened in New York from 4 to 15 May 2008. The meeting was preceded by a number of intersessional activities, in which the Secretariat participated actively.

Bangkok and Windhoek intersessional meetings

18. The first intersessional meeting was held in Bangkok from 28 to 30 January 2009 on the theme "Improving agricultural productivity, water use efficiency and strengthening rural livelihoods". The Executive Secretary participated as a keynote speaker. In his statement, he addressed two important issues: the interlinkages between desertification, agriculture and water use, and the response of the Convention in improving rural livelihoods.

19. A second intersessional meeting was held in Windhoek from 9 to 10 February 2009 at the ministerial level and addressed the theme: "African agriculture in the 21st Century: meeting the challenges, making a sustainable green revolution". The Executive Secretary attended the meeting and stated that the operationalization of a sustainable green revolution in Africa must address land degradation including by reclaiming degraded/dry lands and using to its fullest extent the only existing legally binding international treaty on land issues (the Convention) which could assist countries in assessing and monitoring progress made in that regard.

20. The core issues of the Convention were fully reflected in the Windhoek high-level ministerial declaration on "African agriculture in the twenty-first century: meeting the challenges, making a sustainable green revolution".

Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting

21. The secretariat of the Convention participated actively in the Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting, held in New York from 23 to 27 February 2009, and made presentations in panel discussions on land and desertification. The Executive Secretary addressed the panel on land, where he underscored the role of land in coping with today's global challenges and crises, including poverty eradication through pro-poor policies on sustainable land and water management; food crisis and hunger; water scarcity; climate change; biodiversity conservation through improvement of conditions of land ecosystems; avoiding deforestation; renewable energy; opportunities to invest in/for the people living in degraded lands; and avoiding forced migrations by improving land productivity.

22. In its panel presentation on desertification, the secretariat focused on demonstrating that investing in the implementation of the ten-year strategic plan was a win-win endeavour for achieving sustainable development, and tabled several recommendations. The core issues of the Convention were reflected in the text prepared by the Chair, which constituted the basis for negotiations in the seventeenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development and included recognition of the benefits of sustainable land management in contributing to poverty eradication, food security and sustainable development, and in providing ecosystem services and regulating climate. Other recommendations included scaling up the dissemination of science-based practices to enhance sustainable land management, the establishment of centres of excellence in developing countries on land management and the development of global land indicators.

Seventeenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development)

23. The secretariat actively participated in the deliberations of the seventeenth session of the Commission and organized or co-hosted a number of side events, such as "Climate change in African drylands: adaptation and mitigation options" hosted

by the Convention secretariat, UNDP and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP); "Erosion and soil organic matter decline as elements of soil degradation" organized by the Czech Presidency of the European Union and Spain; "The role of farmers in combating desertification, land degradation and drought" co-hosted with the International Federation of Agricultural Producers and the secretariat and "Land Degradation and Public Security" co-hosted by Spain and the Convention secretariat. On this occasion, an issue paper entitled "Securitizing the ground, grounding security" was circulated. The secretariat also attended a side event organized by the Government of Germany on "Experiences applying the strategic environmental assessment for communal planning in Honduras". On the fringes of the session, the secretariat mounted a substantial exhibition entitled "An uncertain future: living with desertification", which depicted the human impacts of desertification through the voices of communities vulnerable to desertification, land degradation and drought. The exhibition stand, which featured posters, documents and Convention memorabilia attracted many visitors.

24. The outcome documents of the session fully address the core issues of the Convention. On the issue of land, the Commission encouraged the development of policy measures to reduce land degradation that also contribute to poverty eradication and the creation of employment opportunities in developing countries, and recommended conserving and protecting land and soil resources through sustainable development measures in rural and urban areas.

25. The Commission also called for the implementation of policies that address the direct and indirect drivers of land degradation, such as desertification, erosion, loss of soil organic matter, salinization, pollution and unsustainable urban growth, and that lead to the recovery of the physical integrity of the soil, improving its nutrient status and increasing the amount of organic matter it contains. The session called on all countries to work together to strengthen capacities, especially in developing countries, to apply new and existing tools and technologies for monitoring soil quality and land degradation, including by addressing the lack of current data on the extent of land degradation, and evaluating biophysical and socio-economic information.

26. On the issue of drought, the session underlined the role of the Convention as the legal framework for mitigating the effects of drought and called, inter alia, for strengthening the knowledge base and information-sharing on drought, water stress and drought risk management, enhancing the resilience of communities to drought through capacity-building, technology transfer and financing.

27. On the issue of desertification, the session recognized that combating desertification and land degradation and mitigating the effect of droughts required policies that link, inter alia, land use, food security and livelihoods to the goals of sustainable development. The session therefore called for strengthening the institutional framework for policy implementation, implementing practical measures to combat land degradation and desertification, and enhancing capacity-building, technology transfer and financing. In addition, it proposed to enhance cooperation among the three Rio Conventions, and called upon Governments and relevant multilateral organizations, including the Global Environment Facility implementation agencies, to integrate desertification and land degradation into their plans and strategies for sustainable development and to integrate national action plans related to drought and desertification into national development strategies, and

ensure that national action plans in small island developing States address the desertification of coastal areas.

28. On capacity-building, transfer technology and financing, the session called, inter alia, for efforts to promote scientific research and strengthen the scientific base on desertification and drought, which is essential for making informed decisions on sustainable land management and for measuring the results and monitoring the impact of programmes combating desertification.

29. The session called for the mobilization of adequate, predictable and timely financial resources for the implementation of the ten-year strategic plan of the Convention in accordance with its article 20 and invited the Council of the Global Environment Facility to provide in the fifth replenishment of the Facility adequate, timely and predictable financial resources, including new and additional financial resources, for the focal area on land degradation.

30. The session also acknowledged the nexus between climate change and desertification and supported the integration of climate change adaptation measures and disaster risk reduction strategies in agricultural and rural development strategies, sustainable land management and action plans to combat drought and desertification, in particular in developing countries. It also called upon Member States to strengthen the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and encouraged enhanced coherence among United Nations programmes, funds, agencies and entities working on desertification, drought and land issues, in cooperation with the Convention secretariat.

8. Observance of 2009 World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought

31. In its resolution 49/115, the General Assembly proclaimed 17 June the World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought. It invited all States to devote the World Day to promoting public awareness to combat desertification and the effects of drought and the implementation of the provisions of the Convention.

32. The message of the Secretary-General on the occasion stressed that desertification and land degradation affect one third of the Earth's surface, threatening the livelihoods, well-being and development of as many as one billion people. He drew attention to the outcome of the seventeenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, which had indicated that desertification and land degradation were global problems that require a global response. The Secretary-General urged world leaders to provide such a response at their meeting in December in Copenhagen to seal the deal on climate change. He stressed that a comprehensive and equitable agreement to slow the pace of global warming must also help developing countries to adapt to the impacts already evident, by providing adequate and predictable financing to support improved land management, more efficient water use and sustainable agriculture. Since this year's observance of the World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought highlights the growing threat to national and regional stability posed by desertification, he also suggested that it would be useful to recognize the security risks of letting desertification advance unchecked and to acknowledge that combating climate change could help to reverse desertification, increase agricultural productivity, alleviate poverty and enhance global security.

33. On the occasion of the World Day observance, various parties and organizations also hosted special events to demonstrate their strong advocacy for combating desertification and land degradation and mitigating the effects of drought.

9. Land Day

34. On Saturday, 6 June 2009, the secretariat hosted "Land Day" in Bonn to help climate change negotiators and other stakeholders attending the concurrent Bonn climate change talks consider in detail the linkages between climate change and desertification, land degradation and drought. The event was attended by over 170 participants and was structured around three panels: "How does sustainable land management support climate change adaptation?"; "What options can soil carbon sequestration offer for mitigating and adapting to climate change?"; and "Sustainable land management in climate change policy frameworks: what is the way forward?". Jeffrey Sachs, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on the Millennium Development Goals, delivered the keynote address.

10. Status of preparation of the next Conference of the Parties and its subsidiary bodies

35. The ninth session of the Conference of the Parties is to be held in Buenos Aires from 21 September to 2 October 2009. In preparation for the session, regional preparatory meetings have been organized from 29 June to 3 July in Montevideo for Latin America and the Caribbean, 8 to 10 July in Rome for the Northern Mediterranean, 13 to 17 July in Bangkok for Asia, 22 to 24 July in Banja Luka for Central and Eastern Europe and 27 to 31 July in Tunis for Africa. The initial segment of the Session will be held from 21 to 25 September, followed by a special high-level segment on 28 and 29 September structured around three ministerial round-table discussions: the global trends of land degradation; climate change and desertification; and partnerships to mainstream these issues into economic stimulus packages. In accordance with decisions 13 and 18 taken at the eighth session, the first scientific conference of the Committee on Science and Technology under the Convention will be organized on the sidelines of the ninth session of the Conference of the Parties and back to back with the ninth session of the Committee, from 22 to 24 September and address the theme: "Bio-physical and socio-economic monitoring and assessment of desertification and land degradation, to support decision-making in land and water management".

11. United Nations Land

36. In accordance with the guidance provided in the ten-year strategic plan and to follow up on implementation paragraph 14 of General Assembly resolution 63/218, the secretariat has worked closely with UNEP and other relevant United Nations agencies, within the framework of the Environmental Management Group to identify the scope, modalities and deliverables of a Group process on land, including identification of time-bound issues that require a coordinated, system-wide contribution to the implementation of the ten-year strategic plan under the Convention.

37. To this end, a number of consultations have been held, including of the senior Group officials, who met in Poznan in October 2008. In addition, a technical

meeting of the Group was convened in February 2009 on the margins of the twenty-fifth session of the Governing Council of UNEP, and informal consultations were held in New York in May on the sidelines of the seventeenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development.

C. Recommendations

38. **The seventeenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development provided an intergovernmental forum to review the main issues at the core of the Convention and recommend policy options to effectively address desertification, land degradation and drought issues. In conjunction with Land Day, this served to rally more support for the Convention and the ten-year strategic plan and to position the Convention as one of the strategic responses to the various current global challenges and crises, particularly in addressing poverty eradication, food security and climate change.**

39. **The Assembly may wish therefore to make the following recommendations. It may wish to call for effective follow-up to the policy decisions taken at the seventeenth session, particularly to strengthen the institutional policy framework, implement practical measures to combat land degradation and desertification, and enhance capacity-building, technology transfer and financing.**

40. **The Assembly may also wish to consider calling on Governments and, where appropriate, in collaboration with relevant multilateral organizations, including Global Environment Facility implementation agencies, to integrate desertification and land degradation into their plans and strategies for sustainable development and to integrate national action plans related to drought and desertification into national development strategies.**

41. **The Assembly may further wish to recommend the promotion of scientific research and the strengthening of the scientific base on desertification and drought, which is essential for informed decision-making on sustainable land management and for measuring the results and monitoring the impact of programmes combating desertification.**

42. **The Assembly could consider recommending the mobilization of adequate, predictable and timely financial resources for the implementation of the ten-year strategic plan.**

43. **The Assembly might seek to support the integration of climate change adaptation and mitigation measures and disaster risk reduction strategies into agricultural and rural development strategies, and to support sustainable land management and action plans to mitigate the effects of drought and desertification, in particular in developing countries, in light of their anticipated effects on climate change.**

44. **Likewise, the Assembly may also wish to call for the strengthening of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification for the implementation of the ten-year strategic plan and to welcome the report of the Joint Inspection Unit and its findings. It may also wish to encourage coherence among United Nations programmes, funds, agencies and entities working on desertification, drought and land issues under the aegis of the Convention secretariat.**

III. Report of the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity

A. Introduction

1. In its resolution 63/219, the General Assembly invited the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity to report to the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session on the work of the Conference of the Parties and to include in the report information on the preparation of the high-level meeting of the Assembly to be convened at its sixty-fifth session, in 2010, with the participation of heads of State and Government, as a contribution to the International Year of Biodiversity in 2010. The present report is submitted in response to that invitation, with a focus on issues of relevance and interest to the Assembly.

B. Preparation of the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, Nagoya, Japan, 18-29 October 2010

2. Since its most recent report to the General Assembly in July 2008, the Bureau of the ninth Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity held four meetings: Barcelona (October 2008), Berlin (November 2008), Nairobi (February 2009) and Paris (March 2009).

3. Pursuant to decision IX/12 of the Conference of the Parties, the seventh meeting of the Ad hoc Open-ended Working Group on Access and Benefit-sharing was held from 2 to 8 April 2009, at the headquarters of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), in Paris. More than 600 delegates participated in the negotiations. As mandated, the meeting continued the negotiation of an international regime on access and benefit-sharing, focusing on drafting an operational text on objective, scope, compliance, fair and equitable benefit-sharing and access. Pursuant to the "Bonn Mandate" on access and benefit-sharing, three meetings of the Group of Legal and Technical Experts were convened. At the first meeting, held in Windhoek from 2 to 5 December 2008, participants discussed concepts, terms, working definitions and sectoral approaches. At the second meeting held in Tokyo, from 27 to 30 January 2009, the Group of Experts on Compliance, examined issues relating to measures that were available or that could be developed in public and private international law in order to ensure compliance with national access and benefit-sharing legislation, as well as mutually agreed terms regarding access and benefit-sharing. At the third meeting, held in Hyderabad, India, from 16 to 19 June 2009, the Group of Experts on Traditional Knowledge associated with genetic resources further examined the issue of traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources in order to assist the Ad hoc Open-ended Working Group on Access and Benefit-sharing. The eighth and ninth meetings of the Ad hoc Working Group will take place, respectively, in November 2009 in Montreal, Canada, and March 2010 in Colombia.

4. The sixth meeting of the Ad hoc Working Group on Article 8 (j) and Related Provisions will be held from 2 to 6 November 2009 in Montreal, Canada. Pursuant to paragraph 4 of decision IX/13 A, the Secretariat conducted an online discussion forum on article 10 (c) from 11 February to 11 March 2009, and compiled and

analysed case studies to provide advice to the Working Group on Article 8 (j), for its consideration, on how this related provision could be further advanced and implemented as a priority. In addition, a global indigenous peoples' consultation on the potential impacts of reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation on indigenous and local communities was held from 12 to 14 November in Baguio, Philippines, in collaboration with the United Nations University — Institute of Advanced Studies Traditional Knowledge Initiative and Tebtebba.

5. Two meetings of the Ad hoc Technical Expert Group on Biodiversity and Climate Change were held during the period under consideration. Two ad hoc Internet-based discussion groups, established at the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, were also convened prior to the meetings of the Expert Group to assist in identifying major issues related to the items to be considered. The first Expert Group meeting, held from 17 to 21 November 2008 in London, addressed scientific and technical matters concerning the impacts of climate change on biodiversity and the links between biodiversity and climate change mitigation. The report of the meeting was transmitted to the fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Poznan, Poland. The second meeting of the Expert Group took place from 18 to 22 April 2009 in Helsinki where participants addressed the links between biodiversity and climate change adaptation. The main messages emerging from the meeting included the conclusion that adaptation activities that make use of biodiversity and ecosystem services (ecosystem-based adaptation) can, when integrated in an overall adaptation strategy, deliver a cost-effective contribution to climate change adaptation and generate social benefits. The meeting also considered the possible positive and negative impacts of adaptation activities on biodiversity and ecosystem services and proposed some methods to avoid maladaptation. Finally, the group concluded that the value of ecosystems and the services they provide should be taken into account when making decisions about, and providing appropriate incentives for, adaptation to climate change. The main messages from the second meeting of the Expert Group were made available to the participants of the thirtieth session of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific and Technological Advice of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change held in June 2009 in Bonn. A compilation report of the first and second meetings of the Expert Group has been made available for peer review and the final report will be submitted to the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in December 2009.

6. The ninth meeting of the Joint Liaison Group of the Rio Conventions was held in New York on 14 May 2009. Participants took stock of the activities agreed at the previous Group meeting and further defined proposals for joint activities, in particular collaboration towards the International Year of Biodiversity in 2010.

7. The seventh meeting of the Liaison Group of the Biodiversity-related Conventions was held on 9 April 2009 at UNESCO headquarters in Paris. The meeting considered the contribution of the Liaison Group to the post-2010 biodiversity target.

8. The Environmental Management Group, chaired by the Executive Director of UNEP, established an Issue Management Group on the 2010 and post-2010 biodiversity targets, which held its first meeting in Paris on 8 April 2009. The Group was established to evaluate the potential of the United Nations system to support

Member States in advancing towards these targets and to prepare its inputs to the special session of the General Assembly in September 2010 and the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, to be held in October 2010 in Nagoya, Japan.

9. The Federal Minister for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety of Germany, in his capacity as the President of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, convened a high-level working group on the post-2010 biodiversity target in Bonn from 9 to 10 March 2009. With the participation of 50 eminent persons, the meeting provided an opportunity for participants to exchange ideas and views on the progress in achieving the 2010 targets, taking a critical look at why the 2010 targets are unlikely to be achieved, and to discuss the framework of the post-2010 biodiversity target and strong action on the future of the global biodiversity agenda. The outcomes of the working group are expected to contribute in shaping a strategic plan and post-2010 targets to reduce global biodiversity loss.

10. At the initiative of the President of the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, the First Global Private Donor Forum on Biodiversity was held on 3 June 2009 in Berlin. The meeting focused on options and opportunities for private financial commitment for global biodiversity conservation. Participants included high-level Government representatives, heads and senior staff of the United Nations and other organizations, a broad range of media and associations.

11. In partnership with the Chairman of the Group of 77 in New York, a brainstorming session of experts on a multi-year plan of action on biodiversity for development, based on a framework of South-South cooperation, was convened from 6 and 7 November 2008 in Montreal, Canada. Meeting participants reviewed the draft framework for South-South cooperation on biodiversity for full integration into the G-77 Development Platform for the South, and identified activities for inclusion in the multi-year plan of action on biodiversity for development.

12. The Global Partnership on Cities and Biodiversity was formally launched at the World Congress of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) on 7 October 2008 in Barcelona, Spain. The Global Partnership, facilitated by the secretariat of the Convention, brings together United Nations agencies, international organizations, including the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives and IUCN, as well as local governments. It aims to support cities in the sustainable management of their biodiversity resources, to assist cities in implementing practices that support national, regional and international strategies, plans and agendas on biodiversity, and to learn from existing initiatives. The first expert workshop on the development of the Singapore Index on Cities' Biodiversity was held from 10 to 12 February 2009 in Singapore which developed the Singapore City Biodiversity Index. A meeting on the development of guidelines for the preparation of the urban biodiversity strategy and plan of action will be held in Curitiba, Brazil, in November 2009. The Nagoya Biodiversity City Summit will be convened in October 2010, in conjunction with the high-level segment of the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

13. The Expert Meeting on Mainstreaming Biodiversity in Development Cooperation was held from 13 to 15 May 2009 in Montreal, Canada. The meeting, which gathered some 45 international experts, set out to discuss how development agencies can better integrate biodiversity into their strategies, programmes and

projects. A meeting at the level of heads of agencies will be convened in conjunction with the high-level segment of the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

14. In reference to decision IX/24 of the Conference of the Parties on a gender plan of action, a one-day workshop on validation of draft guidelines for mainstreaming gender into national biodiversity strategies and action plans was held on 12 May 2009 in Montreal, Canada. The objective of the meeting was to build understanding on the goals of mainstreaming gender into the strategies and action plans and the relevant mandate of the Convention on gender, raise awareness on the issue and determine the next steps in this regard.

15. During the reporting period, the Secretariat organized seven regional capacity-building workshops on national biodiversity strategies and action plans and mainstreaming biodiversity; a capacity-building workshop for South, South-East and East Asia on the Fourth National Report, and a workshop for least developed countries on the preparation of the Fourth National Report. Also convened were a meeting of the Liaison Group on the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation in Dublin; a workshop on Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA) for the Caribbean region in Port of Spain; and a Pacific Region Workshop on Indigenous Communities, Tourism and Biodiversity: New Information and Web-based Technologies, in Apia.

16. The third meeting on Business and the 2010 Biodiversity Challenge will take place from 30 November to 2 December 2009 in Jakarta. The meeting will provide an opportunity to examine the biodiversity conservation mechanisms that can be adopted until 2010 and lay the groundwork for post-2010 biodiversity targets. A steering committee has been established for the preparation of the meeting, which will be followed by a dialogue between business representatives and key negotiators of the international regime on access and benefit-sharing to enhance understanding of their respective concerns with a view to advancing the negotiations on the regime.

17. The Consortium of Scientific Partners on Biodiversity held its third meeting on 21 October 2008 in Brussels. At the meeting participants took stock of the activities agreed at the second meeting and considered areas for potential contribution to the celebration of the International Day for Biological Diversity 2009 and the International Year of Biodiversity 2010.

18. The Chairs of the Scientific Advisory Bodies of Biodiversity-related Conventions and Rio Conventions will meet on 4 October 2009 in Nairobi to discuss their contribution to the post-2010 biodiversity strategy.

C. Preparation of the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, Nagoya, Japan, 13-16 October 2010

19. The Secretariat, in its preparations for the fifth meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, to be held in Nagoya, Japan, from 13 to 16 October 2010, gave a presentation on the implementation of its programme of work to the Bureau of the Fourth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the

Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety at its first meeting, held in Berlin on 27 November 2008. The adopted plan of intersessional activities includes:

(a) Meetings of the Group of the Friends of the Co-Chairs Concerning Liability and Redress in the Context of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety;

(b) Ad hoc discussion groups and regional real-time online conferences under the Open-ended Online Expert Group on Risk Assessment and Risk Management and two meetings of the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Risk Assessment;

(c) Meetings of the Compliance Committee under the Protocol;

(d) Online forum on the need for and modalities of developing standards for the handling, transport, packaging and identification of living modified organisms;

(e) Meetings of the Liaison Group on Capacity-building for Biosafety and coordination meetings for Governments and organizations implementing and/or funding biosafety capacity-building activities;

(f) Meetings of the Informal Advisory Committee on the Biosafety Clearing-House;

(g) Development of the draft strategic plan for the Protocol and a methodological approach and indicators for the second assessment and review of the Protocol;

(h) Development of a draft programme of work on public awareness, education and participation concerning the safe transfer, handling and use of living modified organisms.

20. The first meeting of the Group of the Friends of the Co-Chairs Concerning Liability and Redress in the Context of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety was held from 23 to 27 February 2009 in Mexico City. The second meeting is scheduled for February 2010 in Kuala Lumpur.

21. Pursuant to the request by the fourth meeting of the Parties, the secretariat launched an Open-ended Online Expert Group on Risk Assessment and Risk Management in November 2008 and convened ad hoc online discussion groups and four real-time online conferences for Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America with the view to providing input for the work of the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Risk Assessment. The secretariat also convened the first meeting of the Expert Group from 20 to 24 April 2009 in Montreal, Canada. The second meeting of the Expert Group is scheduled for April 2010. The report of the Expert Group will form the basis for discussions at the Fifth Meeting of the Parties regarding further guidance on specific aspects of risk assessment and risk management and modalities for cooperation in identifying living modified organisms or specific traits that may have adverse effects on biodiversity, also taking into account risks to human health.

22. The online forum on the need for and modalities of developing standards for the handling, transport, packaging and identification of living modified organisms was held from 18 May to 5 June 2009.

23. The secretariat is currently in the process of preparing the draft strategic plan for the Protocol, the methodological approach and indicators for the second

assessment and review of the Protocol and the draft programme of work on public awareness, education and participation.

D. Preparation of the High-level Segment of the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly

24. At its sixty-third session, the General Assembly decided to convene, as a contribution to the International Year of Biodiversity in 2010, a one-day high-level meeting of the General Assembly, with participation of heads of State, Governments and delegations. The high-level meeting would provide an unique opportunity, to raise awareness on the global crisis of biodiversity loss, the urgent need to implement the three objectives of the Convention and for world leaders to provide political impetus and support for a sustained global response to these biodiversity challenges, including the post-2010 Biodiversity Strategy as a contribution to sustainable development and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, including poverty eradication. The fourth meeting of the Bureau of the ninth Conference of the Parties, held in Paris on 30 March 2009, considered its contribution to the organization of the high-level meeting. The Bureau was of the view that the convening of interactive panels might be conducive to engaging Heads of State and Government on issues related to biodiversity and that the themes for the panels should be strategic and clearly focused. The preparation of the high-level meeting was discussed with relevant United Nations senior officials, as well as with the President of the General Assembly.

25. The high-level event on biodiversity could be convened on 20 September 2010, immediately preceding the general debate of the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly. The Assembly may wish to consider the convening of a limited number of interactive panels on strategic issues of relevance to the three objectives of the Convention, with particular emphasis on the post-2010 biodiversity strategy; the contribution of biodiversity to sustainable development and alleviation of poverty; and the relation between climate change and biodiversity. It may also wish to convene parallel interactive panels. A detailed information note on the organization of the High-level Segment will be made available to the Assembly in early 2010.

26. The panels could be co-chaired by Heads of State and Government, and reflect an equitable geographic representation, with heads of the relevant agencies moderating the panels. The Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum of UNEP to be held in Bali, Indonesia, in February 2010 could provide a forum for the initial preparation of the themes to be discussed at the high-level event of the General Assembly. The panels will be convened immediately after a short opening ceremony. The summary of the discussion by the President is expected to contain a strong political message and will be submitted at the closure of the meeting and transmitted to the High-level Segment of the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, to be held in Nagoya, Japan, from 27 to 29 October 2010.

E. Recommendations

27. **The General Assembly may wish to:**

(a) Encourage Governments and all relevant stakeholders and international organizations to contribute to the celebration of the International Year of Biodiversity in 2010;

(b) Decide, as a follow-up to General Assembly resolution 63/219, to convene a one-day high-level event on 20 September 2010 as a contribution to the International Year of Biodiversity with the participation of Heads of State and Government;

(c) Decide further that the event would be held in two regular meetings of the General Assembly with a limited number of parallel interactive panels on strategic issues of relevance to the three objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity. The outcomes of the discussions will be submitted at the closure of the meeting and transmitted to the High-level Segment of the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, to be held in Nagoya, Japan, from 27 to 29 October 2010;

(d) Urge governments that have not acceded to the Convention on Biological Diversity and its Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to consider doing so as soon as possible.

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Report on the activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services

Efficiency of the implementation of the mandate of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services

"OHCHR has made important contributions to the promotion, protection and mainstreaming of human rights ... the Office could achieve greater results through a more strategic focus on its primary strengths and comparative advantage"

Summary

In accordance with paragraph 101 of General Assembly resolution 62/236, the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) conducted a review of the efficiency of the implementation of the mandate of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR).

OHCHR has made important contributions to the promotion and protection of human rights by raising the visibility of human rights issues in the international community, providing support to build and embed a human rights capacity in national legislation and institutions and contributing to the implementation of the human rights-based approach across the United Nations system.

However, within the context of the broad mandate of OHCHR and its existing resources, OIOS finds that the strategic focus of the Office needs to be sharpened in order to mitigate the risk of its activities being spread too thinly to achieve systematic, sustainable and coherent results. As the only United Nations entity exclusively dedicated to human rights and working within a crowded international human rights community, OIOS finds it imperative that OHCHR be more strategic in its identification of critical activities and establish better its organizational priorities.

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Based on stakeholder perceptions and its independent assessment, OIOS concludes that the comparative advantage of OHCHR in fulfilling its mandate lies in its position as the central reference point and advocate for international human rights standards and mechanisms. OHCHR has the potential for global impact as the authoritative source of advice and assistance to governments, civil society and other United Nations entities concerning compliance with those standards and on the human rights-based approach. OIOS argues that these are functions that OHCHR is best placed to undertake as the only United Nations entity with an exclusive human rights mandate. While OIOS recognizes the important contribution of OHCHR monitoring and reporting activities to the protection of international human rights, it notes that these activities are largely confined to countries and regions with a field presence. OHCHR can most efficiently utilize its finite resources by strategically focusing its activities in line with this comparative advantage.

OIOS also finds that the rapid growth of OHCHR field operations has not been fully coherent. More explicit terms of engagement for its field operations, including the consistent development of entry and exit strategies, would increase its effectiveness. A more strategic and coordinated approach to the development and management of partnerships would enable OHCHR to extend the reach of its activities and to increase the impact of its work. In addition, OHCHR provides significant support to human rights bodies but the follow-up to the work of these bodies needs strengthening. Finally, while recognizing the fluid state of change within which OHCHR has recently been operating, OIOS identifies management challenges in the Office, including unclear leadership direction, inefficient coordination and undocumented processes for some critical tasks.

OIOS recommends that OHCHR:

- In finalizing and implementing the High Commissioner's strategic management plan, for 2010-2011, further sharpen its strategic focus
- Develop an overarching field strategy document
- Improve its work with the human rights bodies through more systematic follow-up of their recommendations and enhancement of linkages
- Further strengthen its partnership
- Improve internal coordination and communication
- Identify and document all critical work processes that have not yet been documented.

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I. Introduction

1. In accordance with paragraph 101 of General Assembly resolution 62/236, the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) reviewed the efficiency of the implementation of the mandate of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). To conduct this review comprehensively, OIOS used its standard evaluation methodology and assessed the relevance, efficiency and effectiveness, including the impact, of OHCHR activities in relation to their objectives.[1]

II. Methodology

2. OIOS utilized nine qualitative and quantitative methods for its evaluation: (a) 16 interviews conducted with the OHCHR leadership to collect preliminary data as part of a scoping mission, followed by 87 interviews of OHCHR staff and partners in Geneva and New York;[2] (b) case study site visits to six OHCHR field presences, during which 135 in-depth interviews were conducted with field-based OHCHR staff, governmental officials, representatives of United Nations entities and civil society partners;[3] (c) a self-administered web-based survey of all OHCHR staff;[4] (d) a self-administered web-based survey of all States members of the Human Rights Council;[5] (e) a self-administered web-based survey of all special mandate holders;[6] (f) a self-administered web-based survey of treaty body members;[7] (g) a self-administered web-based survey of OHCHR partners;[8] (h) a local population survey in Colombia;[9] and (i) a desk review of the mandate of OHCHR, the High Commissioner's strategic management plan, budget fascicles, workplans, recent annual reports of the High Commissioner, policy and procedural documentation and selected performance reports.

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[1] The General Assembly, in paragraph 101 of its resolution 62/236, requested both a comprehensive review of human resources management in OHCHR and a review of the efficiency of the implementation of its mandate. The present report addresses the second part of the request; a separate OIOS report (A/64/201) addresses the first part.

[2] The scoping mission to Geneva was conducted from 15 to 18 September 2008. Subsequent Geneva-based interviews were conducted from 2 to 11 February 2009. Four interviews were conducted in New York.

[3] The sites visited and the dates of the visits were as follows: Colombia, 1-3 December 2008 (included a visit to the Bucaramanga sub-office); Panama, 4 and 5 December 2008; Ecuador, 2-4 February 2009; United Nations Mission in Liberia, 6-10 April 2009; Kenya, 24 March 2009; and Uganda, 27-30 April 2009.

[4] The survey was conducted from 14 January to 5 March 2008 and was sent to 982 staff, based on a staff list provided by OHCHR; 395 responses were received, a 40 per cent response rate.

[5] The survey was conducted from 30 March to 30 April 2009 and was sent to all 47 States members of the Human Rights Council; 22 responses were received, a 47 per cent response rate.

[6] The survey was conducted from 9 March to 2 April 2009 and was sent to 56 current and former special mandate holders; 20 responses were received, a 36 per cent response rate.

[7] The survey was conducted in March and April 2009 and was sent to 121 treaty body members; 48 responses were received, a 40 per cent response rate.

[8] The survey was conducted from 8 April to 1 May 2009 and was sent to 83 United Nations entities, civil society organizations and international organizations; 32 responses were received, a 38 per cent response rate.

[9] The survey was conducted from 13 to 30 April 2009 using a sample of 1,200 respondents from almost all regions and socio-economic groups of Colombia.

3. This evaluation methodology has some limitations. While the OIOS methodology included the review of all key activities, not all could be analysed in detail. In addition, response rates for surveys were not consistently high (two were below 40 per cent). However, in all cases, OIOS triangulated data. For example, survey data were supplemented with data from other sources to compensate for low response rates.

III. Background

4. Human rights constitute one of the United Nations pillars. Since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the General Assembly in 1948, the United Nations has overseen the development of a comprehensive body of human rights legislation and has worked to incorporate a human rights-based approach in all of its programmes.

Mandate of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

5. OHCHR promotes and protects the human rights guaranteed under international law and stipulated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Its mandate derives from Articles 1, 13 and 55 of the Charter of the United Nations, the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, as well as General Assembly resolution 48/141 of 20 December 1993, by which it created the post of United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. On 15 September 1997, in the context of the programme for reform of the United Nations (A/51/950, para. 79), the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Centre for Human Rights were consolidated into a single office: the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

6. The mandate of OHCHR includes responsibility for providing substantive support to other components of the United Nations human rights system: the Human Rights Council (including the universal periodic review and special procedures mechanisms) and nine[10] human rights treaty bodies. OHCHR is responsible for the promotion and protection of over 40 specific human rights.

7. The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights is mandated by the General Assembly with principal responsibility for the following activities (see General Assembly resolution 48/141):

(a) Promoting and protecting the effective enjoyment of all human rights;

(b) Making recommendations to the competent bodies of the United Nations system in the field of human rights with a view to improving the promotion and protection of all human rights;

[10] Human Rights Committee; Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination; Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women; Committee against Torture; Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; Committee on the Rights of the Child; Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families; and Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

(c) Promoting and protecting the realization of the right to development;

(d) Providing technical assistance;

(e) Coordinating United Nations human rights education and public information programmes;

(f) Contributing to the removal of obstacles to the realization of human rights;

(g) Contributing to the prevention of the continuation of human rights violations;

(h) Engaging in a dialogue with all Governments with a view to securing respect for all human rights;

(i) Enhancing international cooperation;

(j) Coordinating the human rights promotion and protection activities throughout the United Nations system;

(k) Rationalizing, adapting, strengthening and streamlining the United Nations human rights machinery.

8. The four-year term of the current High Commissioner began on 1 September 2008.

Structure of the Office

9. OHCHR is composed of four divisions at the subprogramme level, as follows:

(a) The Field Operations and Technical Cooperation Division coordinates the provision of substantive support to OHCHR field presences and undertakes related functions, including rapid responses to critical situations on the ground;

(b) The Research and Right to Development Division researches and analyses human rights issues, supports institutional partnerships, and provides technical advice, expertise and tools to OHCHR field presences, United Nations country teams and partners;

(c) The Human Rights Council and Treaties Division provides substantive and technical support to the Human Rights Council and other United Nations human rights bodies;

(d) The Special Procedures Division provides administrative and logistical assistance to the special procedure mandate holders of the Human Rights Council.

Table 1 shows the number and proportion of posts, by division.

Table 1
Staff resources of OHCHR, by division

Division	*Number of Posts*	*Percentage*
Research and Right to Development	99	12
Human Rights Council and Treaties	89	10
Field Operations and Technical Cooperation[a]	598	70
Special Procedures	63	7
Total	**849**	**100**

Sources: Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009 (A/62/6 (Sect. 23) and Corr.1), sect. C, subprogrammes 1-4.

[a] Includes headquarters and field office staff (see A/62/6 (Sect. 23) and Corr.1, organizational chart).

10. OHCHR has four types of field presence: country offices, regional offices, human rights advisers and human rights components of peacekeeping missions. In December 2008, there were 50 such field presences.

Resources

11. For the 2008-2009 biennium, OHCHR has an overall budget of US$ 309,354,000, with 996 staff posts.[11] Around 37 per cent of the budget and 31 per cent of the posts are funded from the regular budget, and the remainder from voluntary contributions from Member States, intergovernmental organizations, foundations and individuals.

Goals

12. The strategic framework and programme budget for OHCHR set out 26 expected accomplishments. The High Commissioner's strategic management plan for the current 2008-2009 biennium outlines four broad goals:

(a) Demonstrating **leadership** through advocacy and generation of debate within the United Nations, as well as with governments and civil society, on the benefits of integrating human rights into efforts to achieve development, peace and security;

(b) Focusing on a better articulation of the OHCHR **country engagement** strategy, with a clearer definition of roles, complementarities and coordination among the various field presences and between them and headquarters;

(c) Strengthening of **partnerships** forged with United Nations agencies and country teams on the basis of lessons learned;

(d) Reinforcing interaction with **United Nations human rights mechanisms**, placing emphasis on the universal periodic review of all countries by the Human Rights Council as an opportunity to improve the realization of human

[11] Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009 (A/62/6 (Sect. 23) and Corr.1), tables 23.3 and 23.4.

rights based on solid human rights analysis, and lending support and assistance to ensure the success of the exercise.

IV. Evaluation findings

A. The Office has made important contributions to the promotion, protection and mainstreaming of human rights through raising the visibility of human rights issues, supporting human rights capacity-building and promoting the implementation of the human rights-based approach across the United Nations system

13. Human rights measurement is challenging, with no comprehensive or centralized database on human rights available. While a number of United Nations entities and other organizations have reported on human rights issues, no common indicators for measuring human rights abuses and no universally accepted means of monitoring the human rights situation exist. OIOS noted instances in which the various organizations reported on human rights within the same country using different criteria and measurements.

14. Despite this lack of global, comparable data, the information that does exist points to continued human rights problems throughout the world, notwithstanding some apparent improvements. In one country visited by OIOS, one organization reported that more than 182 people had been victims of enforced disappearance during the 12 months ending June 2008, compared to 119 persons in the prior 12-month period. The same organization also reported an increase in new forced displacement cases, from 191,000 in the first six months of 2007 to 270,000 in the first six months of 2008. As further examples, 44 countries held prisoners of conscience in 2004, an improvement over 2001, when 63 countries held such prisoners; also, in 2004, 58 countries arbitrarily arrested and detained individuals without charge or trial, compared to the 72 countries that did so in 2001.

15. Within this context of continuing human rights violations in the world, OIOS finds that OHCHR has made a number of contributions to the promotion and protection of human rights. The comprehensive body of universal standards, institutions and mechanisms that has developed over the past 40 years owes much to the efforts of United Nations human rights bodies supported by OHCHR and its predecessor, the Centre for Human Rights. OHCHR has also played a role in heightening awareness within the international community of human rights issues and violations.

16. Based on its interview and survey data, as well as field visits and document reviews, OIOS classified OHCHR contributions into the three categories discussed below. However, OIOS notes that these contributions were not always systematic or sustainable.

The Office has contributed to the raised visibility of human rights issues in the international community

17. The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights is perceived by many as the visible face of human rights and a strong and independent voice in defending those rights. Over one half of all interviewees at OHCHR headquarters

and field offices consider the High Commissioner's ability to provide leadership and catalyse action on human rights to be a major asset of the Office. The High Commissioner's statements are seen as increasing the visibility of human rights issues and carrying influence within the United Nations and the international community.

18. The Office and the human rights mechanisms it supports report on human rights issues and participate in human rights events, education and public awareness campaigns. Based on interview and survey data, these activities appear to increase the likelihood that violations are publicized and accountability is sought. For example, more than one third of all interviewees in Colombia volunteered that OHCHR had been successful in raising the visibility of extrajudicial executions and contributing to the Government's increased focus on this issue; reports issued by the OHCHR Colombian office have repeatedly referred to extrajudicial executions, listing them in 2006 among a series of grave violations related to civil and political rights.[12] Direct intervention by the Office in cases of alleged human rights violations was also identified by interviewees as having been pivotal in achieving results in particular cases and in exerting a deterrent effect.

19. The sixtieth anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in December 2008 was an opportunity for OHCHR to promote human rights to the general public. To examine the human rights awareness of individuals following these celebrations and in a country in which OHCHR has had a long-standing presence, OIOS surveyed the population of Colombia in April 2009 (see box). The survey showed that Colombians regard human rights as important and that they have been exposed to information about human rights. Most believed that their personal awareness of human rights, as well as that of Colombians in general, had increased over the past 10 years. OIOS attributes at least part of this increased awareness to OHCHR, both directly through the work of its Colombian office and indirectly through its influence on national and international partners.

Knowledge of human rights among the population of Colombia

To examine knowledge and awareness of human rights among the population, OIOS commissioned a population survey in Colombia, a country in which OHCHR has had a long-standing presence.[a] The survey was not designed to assess the work of governmental agencies in the area of human rights, but rather to assess the impact of the OHCHR country office. The survey findings showed that:

(a) Colombians regard human rights as important to them personally and integral to many public policy issues. Presented with a list of four larger issues (economic development, environmental protection, international relations and respect for human rights), two thirds of all respondents, and even higher proportions of women and young people, reported that respect for human rights was most important. The rights to live in freedom and safety and to equal treatment under the law were considered most important; 80 per cent or more of respondents believed that issues including children, health and education, food and water, working conditions and the environment were human rights issues;

[12] See E/CN.4/2006/9; see also subsequent reports of the High Commissioner to the Human Rights Council on the situation of human rights in Colombia.

(b) Just over one third of Colombians surveyed reported receiving information about human rights over the past year. The media were the main source of such information, although schools and educational facilities were important sources for young people;

(c) Knowledge of the international and national legal framework around human rights is limited, although more than 90 per cent of respondents knew that international laws and treaties existed and that Colombia had laws promoting and protecting human rights. When asked whether particular institutions or organizations worked to promote and protect human rights in Colombia, 15 per cent of respondents identified the main agency responsible for human rights (Defensor del Pueblo de la República de Colombia), while a slightly higher proportion nominated the United Nations;

(d) Around one half of the respondents were aware that OHCHR had an office in Colombia, but only a fraction had had any contact with it. Respondents overwhelmingly supported its presence and two thirds believed that it had had a positive impact;

(e) Awareness of human rights issues appears to have increased in Colombia. Around 70 per cent of respondents regarded themselves as more aware of such issues than they had been 10 years earlier and a similar proportion believed that the awareness of Colombians in general had increased;

(f) When responses were disaggregated by gender, women reported significantly higher levels of interest in human rights and significantly lower levels of knowledge concerning human rights mechanisms in Colombia than did men. Differences in location, education and socio-economic status were less influential.

[a] The Colombian office of OHCHR, established in 1996, had a staff of 80 in December 2008, making it the third longest-operating and second largest of the OHCHR country offices. See OHCHR, *2008 Report: Activities and Results*, pp. 68-153.

The Office has provided support to build and embed human rights capacity in national institutions, legislation and civil society

20. The Office has applied its technical expertise to assisting governments, in particular in countries in which it has a field presence. When invited to do so, OHCHR reviews existing legislation and provides support for drafting new legislation that complies with international human rights standards and treaties. It also supports governments and civil society in their preparation of reports required under treaties and the universal periodic review mechanism. In Colombia and Uganda, for example, every interviewee involved in this work stressed the important role played by OHCHR in helping them to develop strong human rights-compliant legislative tools and the utility of this assistance to host governments. Also, a governmental official in one country visited by OIOS observed that the Government's approach to minority and disadvantaged groups had evolved from a charity model to a rights-based model and that OHCHR had assisted in incorporating this into public policy and legislation. OHCHR has also played a capacity-building role in national human rights institutions, national military

operations and civil society organizations. In all six OHCHR field presences visited by OIOS, OHCHR was providing courses and materials on human rights directly to the recipients and training trainers. In Uganda, for example, OHCHR reported having provided training in human rights to over 3,300 military and police, staff of the Uganda Human Rights Commission, local governmental officials, the Civil-Military Cooperation Centre and civil society organizations in 2008.[13] OIOS interviewees from recipient organizations in Uganda described these training initiatives as one of OHCHR's successes; one noted that OHCHR training staff had earned the respect of soldiers, while another commented that increased awareness of human rights had helped to reduce violence.

The Office has had some success in promoting the implementation of the human rights-based approach across the United Nations system

21. The Office is mandated to promote and facilitate the human rights-based approach in the development and humanitarian activities of the United Nations system of organizations. A major initiative in this respect, action 2, linked OHCHR, the United Nations Development Group and the Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs in a plan of action to strengthen human rights-related United Nations action at the country level.[14] While the success of this and other initiatives is necessarily dependent on the commitment of all participants, the involvement of OHCHR has contributed to a range of positive outcomes. For example, OIOS found OHCHR to have played an important role in integrating human rights in some thematic areas, such as indigenous issues, where specific initiatives to empower and include indigenous groups have been adopted by United Nations entities active in the area. As further examples, in the United Nations country teams in Ecuador and Uganda, the technical expertise of OHCHR staff was particularly valued as resulting in a more effective human rights approach in country-level programming.

22. Nevertheless, several United Nations system partners emphasized the challenges in mainstreaming human rights. Interviewees noted the variety of sensitivities and challenges which must be met by humanitarian and development programmes when working to mainstream human rights. Further concerns expressed related to ambiguities arising from overlapping human rights mandates. Some United Nations system partners claimed that OHCHR did not always appreciate the constraints within which they operate.

B. The Office could achieve greater results through a more strategic focus

The Office could implement its mandate more strategically

23. While acknowledging that OHCHR has had successes in fulfilling its mandate, OIOS considers it imperative that, as the only United Nations entity exclusively dedicated to human rights, the Office be more strategic in identifying the activities most critical to fully implementing its mandate. This will enable OHCHR to translate existing successes into more systematic, sustainable and coherent results and mitigate the risks of inefficient resource utilization. Part of this effort must

[13] See OHCHR, *2008 Report: Activities and Results*, pp. 76-77.

[14] This initiative was in place from 2004 to 2008.

address the need to more systematically assess and monitor human rights, as referred to in paragraphs 13 and 14 above.

24. One challenge that OHCHR faces is the wide range of functions covered by its broad mandate. The Office is required to provide analytical, legal and technical expertise and secretariat support to the main bodies of the United Nations human rights system. In the field, pursuant to the mandate established by the General Assembly in resolution 48/141, it engages in dialogue with governments with a view to securing respect for all human rights and works with civil society and international organizations in preventing the continuation of human rights violations. The High Commissioner speaks out and advocates on behalf of the international community. Finally, the mandate of OHCHR includes responsibility for coordinating human rights promotion and protection activities throughout the United Nations system. OIOS notes that OHCHR performs these functions within the context of a complex international human rights community encompassing well over 100 national human rights institutions, specialized human rights courts and civil society organizations. OIOS therefore finds it imperative that the Office establish clear priorities among competing demands in order to more efficiently allocate its finite resources and to identify and utilize its comparative advantage. OIOS finds that although OHCHR continues to take steps in this direction, this objective has not yet been fully achieved. The Office reports that it is addressing this challenge through the current strategic planning process for the 2010-2011 biennium.

25. Based on stakeholder perceptions and its independent assessment, OIOS concludes that the comparative advantage of OHCHR in fulfilling its mandate lies in its position as the central reference point and advocate for international human rights standards and mechanisms. The Office has the potential for global impact as the authoritative source of advice and assistance to governments, civil society and other United Nations entities on compliance with human rights standards and on the human rights-based approach. OIOS argues that these are functions that OHCHR is best placed to undertake as the only United Nations entity with an exclusive human rights mandate. While OIOS recognizes the important contribution made by OHCHR monitoring and reporting activities on the protection of international human rights, it notes that these are largely confined to those countries and regions with a field presence. Within the context of its broad mandate, OIOS finds that OHCHR can most efficiently utilize its finite resources by strategically focusing its activities in line with this comparative advantage.

The strategic management plan and strategic framework do not establish clear organizational priorities for the Office

26. The High Commissioner's 117-page strategic management plan for 2008-2009 is comprehensive, identifying four broad goals related to advocacy, country engagement, partnership and interaction with United Nations human rights bodies, and global and national level indicators. OIOS finds the strategic framework for human rights to be comprehensive, with 26 expected accomplishments. However, neither establishes specific organizational priorities, raising questions about overall feasibility. By organizational priorities, OIOS means the precise identification of activities and tasks that are most critical to the implementation of the mandate.

27. The Office of Internal Oversight Services reviewed a sample of the internal planning tools of OHCHR and determined that it was striving to strengthen its strategic planning processes.[15] For example, for the 2008-2009 biennium, OHCHR senior management provided a template to all headquarters and field offices establishing a consistent format for reporting planned activities and outputs. This template required each office to identify which of the accomplishments set out in the two-year strategic management plan their respective activities addressed. Also, OHCHR reported that guidance for the 2010-2011 biennium was amended to better reflect the work of divisions and that it had taken steps to be more focused in the development of its strategic management plan for 2010-2011 by selecting six thematic priority areas for which global strategies and expected accomplishments would be determined within available resources. Further, OHCHR reported that a management consultancy firm had started to facilitate joint thinking among senior managers towards the consolidation of strategies and work processes.

28. Despite these steps, however, OIOS notes that the current strategic management plan, strategic framework and other annual workplan documents do not provide a clear plan for the coherent implementation of activities. Despite some identification of specific activities, many references remain broad. For example, OIOS finds no evidence that OHCHR has identified the most critical tasks that the Office will undertake and cannot discern sufficient prioritization of planned activities. OIOS notes a risk to the reputation of OHCHR if the Office seeks to achieve many broadly defined objectives simultaneously and is unable to do so.

29. Some OHCHR staff expressed concerns on this issue. Sixty-four per cent of the staff surveyed strongly or somewhat agreed that the Office had clear and effective strategies in place to achieve its objectives, while the remaining one third believed that this was not the case. Also, in interviews, many staff suggested that stronger agreement on priorities, with clear and more explicit deliverables, would allow them to perform their work more effectively. For example, almost all field staff interviewed reported challenges associated with determining priorities in the face of multiple, competing expectations. OHCHR staff had mixed views on the feasibility of implementing the OHCHR mandate: 44 per cent rated it as excellent or good; 39 per cent rated it as fair; and 17 per cent rated it as poor or very poor. Two thirds reported a shared vision between headquarters and field-based offices with regard to implementing the mandate, while one third did not.

30. OHCHR partners had similar perceptions. They reported not having a clear understanding of OHCHR priorities or a good understanding of the work programme of the Office in the field. *OHCHR states that its field presences operate under open terms of reference, the High Commissioner's strategic management plan is a public document, and that the website of the Office is fully open and accessible.*

[15] The sample included the strategic plan of the Field Operations and Technical Cooperation Division for the biennium 2008-2009, the guidelines and template for the OHCHR annual workplan for 2009 and several office workplans for 2008.

C. Despite some successes, the rapid growth of field operations has not been fully coherent

The field presence of the Office has expanded substantially

31. OHCHR field operations have grown rapidly over the past decade. During the 2008-2009 biennium, more than one half of the Office's total staff of 996 and over one half its budget were committed to activities and offices outside Geneva and New York. Table 2 compares the proportion of staff and financial resources dedicated to field operations in 1996, when the first OHCHR field presence was established, and in 2008. As illustrated in table 2, the proportion of OHCHR staff in the field increased fivefold between 1996 and 2008 and the field budget rose even faster.

Table 2
Comparison of OHCHR resources allocated to the field, 1996 and 2008
(Percentage)

	1996	*2008*
Staff in field	9.0	50.3
Budget in field	4.0	51.0

Source: OHCHR data.

Field-based successes are being achieved on an ad hoc basis rather than within the context of an overarching strategy

32. OIOS notes that OHCHR field offices have achieved positive results but, as discussed above, these have largely been ad hoc. OIOS notes the development of a 2008-2009 strategic plan for field operations but finds little evidence that a coherent, coordinated field strategy is in place. *OHCHR states that the current planning process for 2010-2011 is specifically aimed at a more coherent, coordinated field strategy.*

33. This lack of an overarching strategy is perceived as an obstacle to the conduct of efficient and effective field operations by OHCHR staff and stakeholders. OIOS notes that field operations are hampered by insufficient priority-setting, inconsistent decision-making and limited standardization of work methods. Furthermore, OIOS finds no evidence of a systematic approach to decisions concerning the location and type of OHCHR field presences. The resulting allocation of resources does not appear sufficiently strategic. *OHCHR states that the overarching strategy for field presence expansion ... has been clear from the beginning, and the 2006-2007 and 2008-2009 bienniums have been periods of further refining the strategies for each* [field] *model.*

Terms of engagement for field operations are lacking, including entry and exit strategies

34. The High Commissioner's strategic management plan for 2008-2009 envisages a field-engagement approach that is based on an Office-wide assessment of the human rights situation and need, with responses formulated in line with its areas of

expertise and comparative advantage.[16] OIOS acknowledges that OHCHR faces limitations on its strategic decision-making, given the larger political framework, and recognizes the need for some flexibility given the hugely varying context on the ground. However, OIOS finds that the ongoing systematic assessment needed to implement the envisaged approach is not consistently taking place and that the entry strategies for field presences needed to implement the envisaged approach are currently lacking.[17]

35. OIOS also recognizes an inherent tension between the technical assistance and capacity-building role of OHCHR and its monitoring role, which includes reporting on violations. OIOS notes, however, that OHCHR has not yet succeeded in developing and implementing strategies to address this tension. Data collected during OIOS field visits consistently point to greater receptivity on the part of governments to OHCHR technical assistance and capacity-building, and less acceptance of its monitoring and reporting activities. OIOS finds evidence that this asymmetry affects OHCHR work priorities in the field. In both country offices visited by OIOS, delays in field mandate renewals were cited by numerous interviewees as inhibiting the effectiveness of the OHCHR field presence. Consequences included delays in issuing publications and in renewing staff contracts and uncertainties concerning future joint commitments with United Nations partners. OIOS notes that, to be more fully effective, OHCHR needs an overarching, clear entry strategy which explicitly addresses the role it will play and which is aligned with the political situation in individual countries.

36. OIOS also finds little evidence of an overarching clear exit strategy for field presences, or that OHCHR is sufficiently identifying, monitoring and reporting on the longer-term outcomes of its field presences. This may be linked to the difficulty of measuring outcomes, but it also reflects the willingness of many host governments to retain an office once established. However, OIOS notes that, without a clear exit strategy, OHCHR runs the risk of becoming entrenched in the countries in which it is located rather than contributing to sustainable outcomes that are independent of its continuing presence. This problem was recognized in a 2007 independent impact assessment of the Colombian office.[18] *OHCHR states that while field presences necessarily should be conceived as long term — advances in human rights require changes in mindsets which take a long time — political changes on the ground can abruptly end the Office's direct involvement or drastically modify it.*

Roles and priorities of different types of field presences are unclear

37. In December 2008, OHCHR operated 50 field presences throughout the world, including 8 country offices, 10 regional offices and related facilities, and 15 human rights advisers; it also provided 22 staff to assist the human rights teams working within peacekeeping missions.[19] A comparison of the distribution of staff and financial resources across these field presences over the past 12 years is shown in table 3.

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[16] *High Commissioner's Strategic Management Plan 2008-2009*, p. 20.

[17] OHCHR informs OIOS that it has entry strategies for several countries and is implementing an exit strategy for one country.

[18] Varela Quirós, Villarán de la Puente, Cleves Saa, "Impact assessment: Colombia office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights", November 2007, p. 17.

[19] OHCHR, *2008 Report: Activities and Results*, pp. 68-70.

Table 3
Distribution of OHCHR resources in the field, 1996 and 2008
(Percentage)

	1996	*2008*
Country offices		
Field staff	100	79.1
Field budget	100	67.7
Regional offices		
Field staff	0	12.8
Field budget	0	11.8
Human rights advisers		
Field staff	0	3.7
Field budget	0	6.6
Human rights component of peacekeeping missions		
Field staff	0	4.3
Field budget	0	14.0

Source: Data provided by UNHCR.

38. Based on its analysis of interview and survey data, OIOS identified the primary strengths and vulnerabilities of each of the four types of field presences, as summarized in table 4.

Table 4
Characteristics of different types of OHCHR field presences

Type of field presence	*Strengths*	*Vulnerabilities*
Country office	Stand-alone status provides visibility and strong voice Country-specific work programme can be tailored May deliver significant achievements on the ground	Activities dependent on host government receptivity Resource-intensive and limited to a few countries Tendency to undertake activities itself rather than with partners, encouraging institutionalization within the country and limiting sustainability
Regional office	Potential coverage of countries without a stand-alone country office	Limited resources under current arrangements

Type of field presence	*Strengths*	*Vulnerabilities*
	Ability to interact with the regional offices of other United Nations entities	Ambiguities about role and function
	Potential to become the go-to repository of human rights expertise in the region	Misalignment between stakeholder expectations and office capacity
Human rights adviser	Promotes natural integration within the United Nations country team	Effectiveness dependent on relations within the United Nations country team
	Promotes focus on technical assistance, coordination and working through partners	Limited guidance from headquarters, and inconsistency among United Nations country teams, concerning the degree of proactivity of the human rights adviser
		Dual reporting lines (OHCHR and Resident Coordinator) complicate planning and accountability
Human rights component of peacekeeping mission	Increased focus on coordination and working through other United Nations partners	Difficulty maintaining independent voice
	Benefits from strong voice of the Special Representative and Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General and access to mission resources	Tension between political peacekeeping mandate and OHCHR mandate
		Dual reporting lines (OHCHR and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General) complicate planning and accountability

39. OIOS notes several issues related to the four types of OHCHR field presences. First, with regard to country offices, OIOS questions whether the current significant investment in these offices is an optimal use of resources and makes best use of the strengths of OHCHR. Despite the potential advantages of their visibility and stand-alone status, country offices absorb a significant proportion of the field budget and

their effectiveness is largely dependent on the receptivity of host Governments.[20] *OHCHR states that country offices represent the OHCHR field engagement at it fullest, based on the convergence of the political will of the host country to work with the Office, donor support, the systemic human rights challenges to address, and the High Commissioner's independent judgement on the placement of her staff and the resources required. While they are the exception rather than the rule, the country offices have the most potential insofar as the Office's impact on the ground.*

40. OIOS observes that, while the regional office model may have additional potential, a more developed strategy is needed, as considerable uncertainty surrounds the role and priorities of current OHCHR regional offices. The expectations of regional offices are also often greater than their capacity to meet those expectations. OIOS observes that human rights advisers can be highly effective under optimal conditions. In one country visited by OIOS, stakeholders attributed the success of the human rights adviser presence to the credibility of an experienced adviser, the mobilization of additional staff support and good working relationships with the United Nations country team and the Government. However, elsewhere, stakeholders lacked a good understanding of the role of the human rights adviser and were ambivalent about its impact. Dual reporting and accountability lines between the human rights adviser and the resident coordinator on the one hand, and the human rights adviser and OHCHR headquarters on the other, pose additional challenges for this type of presence.[21]

41. OIOS notes that the fourth type of OHCHR field presence — a human rights component of a peacekeeping mission — can have an impact, but that careful navigation is necessary to ensure clarity of roles among all of the components operating in complex peacekeeping environments. OIOS notes that these human rights components, mandated by Security Council resolutions, result in increased opportunities to promote and protect international human rights and for effective coordination with other United Nations partners. However, stakeholder expectations of this presence are not always consistent, and dual reporting lines, the lack of a stand-alone voice and the need to manage political tensions and other priorities within the mission are complicating factors. In the peacekeeping mission visited by OIOS, United Nations partners generally acknowledged the technical expertise of OHCHR and welcomed its contribution to the United Nations country team, but expressed concerns about the apparent lack of an underlying strategy guiding its in-country activities. OIOS acknowledges, however, recent achievements in obtaining more structured cooperation with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Political Affairs.

Field-based staff would like further guidance and support from headquarters

42. Many field-based interviewees and survey respondents report that additional guidance and support for field-based operations would be helpful. The Field Operations and Technical Cooperation Division of OHCHR is responsible for the coordination of OHCHR field presences and activities. However, several field staff

[20] OIOS acknowledges that some portion of the OHCHR field budget may be earmarked for specific activities or country operations and that there may be constraints on its redistribution to other uses.

[21] OIOS reviewed the OHCHR internal policy paper on regional offices (17 March 2009), its final policy on human rights advisers and generic terms of reference for the advisers.

interviewed reported that contact with headquarters, including their desk officer, is often sporadic and slow. They emphasize that the rapid field growth of OHCHR has resulted in a need for improved coordination, better communication methods and more coherent work methods. In addition, several field staff noted that clearer guidelines from headquarters for defining priorities and work outputs would be helpful. For example, they identified the lack of political will as the biggest challenge they faced in the field but reported that insufficient guidance was received from headquarters on navigating sensitive political issues.

43. OIOS finds that links between headquarters and the field could be more systematic. In particular, experience and knowledge from the field do not systematically feed into headquarters activities. Further, some field-based staff stated that, despite an annual meeting of field representatives in Geneva, there was insufficient interaction among the field presences themselves. OIOS considers this a missed opportunity to share best practices and lessons learned. *OHCHR states that substantive support or guidance is provided to the field offices and the United Nations country teams on a daily basis by the thematic units of the Research and Right to Development Division, and less frequently but routinely by the staff of the Treaty Bodies Branch and Special Procedures Division at headquarters.*

D. The Office provides significant support to United Nations human rights bodies, but the follow-up to the work of these bodies and linkages with the other activities of the Office are limited

The expertise of the Office is critical to the functioning of human rights bodies

44. Through its servicing of the Human Rights Council, including the universal periodic review and special procedures mechanisms, as well as the nine human rights treaty bodies, OHCHR has positioned itself as a repository of knowledge and expertise on international human rights standards. OIOS acknowledges that OHCHR has done so within the context of changes in the work of these intergovernmental bodies which have resulted in additional workloads in recent years.

45. OIOS surveyed Member States serving on the Human Rights Council, special procedure mandate holders and treaty body members about the support that they receive from OHCHR. Across all groups, 80 per cent or more of respondents considered this support to be very important or important in helping them to achieve their mandates. The survey respondents also consistently gave high ratings to the expertise of OHCHR staff, including their ability to provide high quality analytical, legal and technical advice. OIOS thus concludes that the support provided by OHCHR to these human rights bodies and mechanisms has underpinned them and facilitated the achievement of their respective goals.

Support provided by the Office to the Human Rights Council, its special procedures mechanism and treaty bodies is generally valued, but follow-up to the work of these bodies is limited, and other areas for improvement are identified

Human Rights Council

46. The Human Rights Council Branch of OHCHR, with 22 staff,[22] provides support to the Human Rights Council. A large majority of the members of the Human Rights Council which responded to the survey (86 per cent) rated their working relationship with OHCHR as very or somewhat effective, and the support provided by the Office to this body was generally well valued. However, only one fifth reported that all or most of their expectations of OHCHR were being met. Areas in which expectations were cited as not being met include: provision of information and technical support; provision of information in a timely manner; and provision of information in all United Nations languages. Many Council members and OHCHR staff cited a need for greater clarification of their respective roles.

47. Since 2006, OHCHR has provided support to the ambitious universal periodic review process, which will result in the periodic examination of the human rights records of all Member States. Respondents to the Human Rights Council survey gave one of their highest ratings to the support provided by OHCHR in relation to the process, including work on compilations and summaries; 75 per cent rated this support as excellent or good. OIOS also noted some awareness of the process at the country level during its field missions. This awareness extended to civil society organizations, one of which had provided input to a country report. However, Council members and OHCHR staff, as well as stakeholders, expressed concern that OHCHR did not offer more support for the follow-up and implementation of recommendations arising from the universal periodic review. One OHCHR manager cited follow-up of the many recommendations resulting from the review as one of the biggest challenges OHCHR currently faces. OIOS notes that the role OHCHR will play in supporting follow-up to the review remains to be defined; the degree to which OHCHR can support it will affect the results achieved by this new mechanism.[23]

Special procedures mechanism

48. The Special Procedures Division of OHCHR, with 63 staff, provides substantive and technical support and advice to mandate holders under the special procedures mechanism of the Human Rights Council. This includes directly supporting the work of 28 thematic special procedures and, indirectly, that of the overall system of special procedure mandate holders. OHCHR reports that the special procedures mechanism has raised the visibility of human rights issues, as illustrated by the more than 150 press statements and 130 reports issued each year in the recent past. Respondents to the survey of special mandate holders rated the effectiveness of their working relationship with OHCHR staff highly, with 75 per cent stating that their overall working relationship was very or somewhat

[22] Data from the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009 (A/62/6 (Sect. 23)), organizational chart.

[23] A trust fund has been established for follow-up to the universal periodic review; however, OHCHR reports that it has not yet received any funds. Therefore, it remains to be seen how it would be used.

effective; 20 per cent rated it somewhat ineffective and 5 per cent rated it very ineffective.

49. A number of areas for improvement were, however, identified. Special mandate holders cited a need for more OHCHR staff to be assigned in a dedicated manner to support their work, as well as the need for better logistical support. Also, while the analytical work performed by OHCHR was deemed important, not all special mandate holders rated the quality of this work highly: 58 per cent rated it as excellent or good, 16 per cent rated it as fair and 26 per cent rated it as poor. Another support function identified as needing improvement was the OHCHR Quick Response Desk which has a staff of two. OHCHR does not appear to be fully achieving the envisioned goal — to process and coordinate the provision of information and communications to and by mandate holders. No respondent rated its services as excellent, 50 per cent rated it as good, 36 per cent rated it as fair and 14 per cent rated it as very poor.

50. OIOS finds that the support provided by OHCHR in following up the recommendations of the special mandate holders needs additional attention. No special mandate holder rated the support provided in this regard as excellent or good, 27 per cent rated it as fair, 40 per cent rated it as poor and 33 per cent rated it as very poor. A high-ranking OHCHR manager agrees with this assessment, saying that the Office needed to face a main challenge, the follow-up to the implementation of recommendations made by the special mandate holders and, that OHCHR needed to assist in monitoring this and to make sure that United Nations offices took up these recommendations.

Human rights treaty bodies

51. Human rights treaties are an important part both of the international human rights framework promoted by the United Nations and of the international human rights legal framework. The Human Rights Treaties Branch provides support to the nine human rights treaty bodies, with a staff of 67. OIOS finds that the role of OHCHR in support of these treaty bodies is highly valued. A large majority of respondents to the survey of treaty body members (86 per cent) considered this support to be very important or important to their work, and over 75 per cent rated both the knowledge of OHCHR staff of treaty body issues and the technical support provided by the Office as good or excellent. Furthermore, 89 per cent rated the overall effectiveness of their working relationship with OHCHR as very or somewhat effective.

52. Treaty body members also identified areas for improvement. Some respondents reported that OHCHR could better facilitate a harmonization of approaches to the work of the treaty bodies; 53 per cent rated this work as excellent or good, 35 per cent rated it as fair and 12 per cent as poor. Almost 40 per cent volunteered their perception that additional staff support was needed, with many specifying that having OHCHR staff assigned to work exclusively with their treaty body was necessary to facilitate continuity in servicing and subject matter expertise.

53. OIOS finds that OHCHR support to the follow-up of treaty body recommendations is limited. Fifty-five per cent of respondents to the survey rated this work as excellent or good, 25 per cent rated it as fair and 20 per cent rated it as poor. Follow-up of treaty body recommendations is the primary responsibility of the Field Operations and Technical Cooperation Division, but the Human Rights

Treaties Branch also has a role to play. Respective roles and responsibilities between these two units are still unclear. Staff of the Branch identify insufficient follow-up of treaty body recommendations as a major challenge that they face in their work given current resources. Follow-up of the recommendations of treaty bodies is vital to ensure that the legal obligations of the State parties which are signatories to the treaties are being met.

Linkages with other activities of the Office and other human rights stakeholders, and among the treaty bodies, are not strong

54. OIOS identified additional deficiencies with regard to the work of OHCHR with human rights bodies. First, as revealed by survey and interview data, insufficient linkages exist between work in support of human rights bodies and the work of staff in other OHCHR branches. For example, some treaty body members considered that the Human Rights Treaties Branch did not sufficiently promote and facilitate the integration of treaty body activities with other activities of the Office. OIOS found some examples of linkages in its field visits. If these linkages were made more regular and systematic, they could result in better incorporation of treaty body observations and recommendations by OHCHR field staff in capacity-building activities with Governments and civil society.

55. Furthermore, OIOS determined that linkages between the work of human rights bodies and that of other relevant stakeholders were insufficient. These include linkages between the bodies and civil society, as well as between the bodies and other United Nations entities engaged in human rights work. Furthermore, facilitation by OHCHR of interactions among the various human rights bodies was reported by interviewees and survey respondents to need strengthening.

E. The Office is not fully effective in its coordination with and support of human rights partners

The Office has developed an extensive range of partnerships

56. Because the mandate of OHCHR requires it to carry out its work in coordination with Governments and other United Nations entities, partnerships are crucial to its effectiveness. OIOS notes that OHCHR has developed an extensive range of such partnerships, both at headquarters and at the national and local levels. It supports them directly through its national institutions and civil society units and also with technical advice provided in thematic areas. These partnerships are generally valued; a majority of respondents to the survey of OHCHR partners (85 per cent) considered that a good working relationship was very or somewhat important to their own success.

Effective partnerships provide additional leverage for OHCHR activities

57. Many of the partnerships, including the action 2 initiative referred to in paragraph 21 above, have delivered tangible outcomes in often difficult circumstances. OIOS finds that the most effective partnerships provide additional leverage for OHCHR activities, thus creating a multiplier effect on their impact. OIOS identified a number of examples in the field where OHCHR was working with national human rights institutions and civil society organizations to train trainers and to advise those reporting on allegations of human rights violations, or was

collaborating with governmental agencies, civil society organizations and the media to promote awareness-raising. OIOS notes that these approaches have resulted in more people being trained, more violations being investigated and more public relations activities being undertaken than if OHCHR had undertaken those activities alone.

An overall strategy for partnerships is, however, lacking

58. OHCHR appears to lack an overall strategy for developing and supporting partnerships, but does acknowledge recent achievements in strengthening partnerships in the development sector through structured cooperation with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Political Affairs. Interview and survey data reveal that many partnerships operate on a flexible but ad hoc, issue-driven basis, without formal structures or regular consultation. The memorandum of understanding with the United Nations Development Programme, a crucial partner with which a formal structure existed, has been allowed to lapse and interactions were reported by interviewees from both entities as being occasionally difficult and unproductive. Many partners also indicated that their partnerships were formed as the result of personal initiatives, thus threatening their sustainability. Furthermore, interview and survey data suggest that individual partnerships are sometimes seen as working well at the field level but less successfully at headquarters.

59. As a result, OIOS notes that the larger human rights partnership network lacks coherence. Some potentially important partnerships have drifted, while others thrive. A number of interviewees from United Nations entities with substantial field presences cited the Office's lack of initiative in respect of some substantive matters with human rights elements, including refugees, trade and intellectual property, and a lack of active participation in some inter-agency forums, including the work of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee on humanitarian affairs. OIOS notes that partnerships which lack the continuity of joint initiatives or committed staff on both sides are particularly fragile. The most common suggestion made by respondents for improving partnership effectiveness was for OHCHR to engage in more regular and systematic collaboration, consultation and interaction with its partners.

Partnerships are not well managed

60. Partners identified several components of their partnerships that were not well managed. Many reported difficulty in identifying the right people to contact at OHCHR on particular matters; the recent expansion of the Civil Society Unit was seen to have reduced, but not eliminated, such access problems. Furthermore, some partners also considered that their mandates were not well understood by the Office and that it did not always consult them on matters of mutual interest. Others reported that OHCHR was not always able to prepare non-official guidance documents in formats and languages that would make them more accessible to those most likely to benefit from their use.

F. Management challenges contribute to inefficiencies

Despite partial implementation of the recommendations arising from the OIOS management review of 2002, significant management challenges persist

61. In line with the recommendations arising from the management review of OHCHR conducted by OIOS in 2002 (see A/57/488), the Office has changed its organizational structure and implemented other recommended improvements. OIOS finds that OHCHR continues to promote an organizational culture in which excellence is sought and there is receptivity to implementing lessons learned. However, a number of the management problems cited previously by OIOS continue to adversely affect its ability to maximize its effectiveness.

62. OHCHR staff do not consistently give the overall operation and management of OHCHR high marks: 55 per cent of respondents to the survey of OHCHR staff perceived that OHCHR was managed either very or somewhat effectively, while the remaining 45 per cent perceived the Office to be managed somewhat or very ineffectively. In seeking to understand this assessment, OIOS identified three areas of particular concern, but recognizes the larger context of fluidity and uncertainty that are inherent in times of expansion and changing management structure. OIOS finds some evidence of: (a) unclear leadership direction, leading to perceptions of inefficient resource utilization and inequitable workload distribution; (b) inefficient coordination among OHCHR operational units and between headquarters and field operations, which threatens the cohesive implementation of the Office's programme of work; and (c) undocumented work processes for some critical tasks, which has negative implications for efficiency.

Unclear leadership direction is resulting in perceptions of inefficient utilization of resources

63. OIOS identified several ways in which leadership direction can be improved. First, while more explicitly established than they were when OIOS undertook its management review in 2002, current reporting lines and decision-making processes are still not fully effective in achieving clarity with regard to work priorities. Eleven per cent of respondents to the survey rated clarity of reporting lines as very effective, 53 per cent rated it as somewhat effective, 24 per cent rated it as somewhat ineffective and 12 per cent rated it as very ineffective. Decision-making did not receive consistently high ratings either, with 57 per cent rating it as either very or somewhat effective and 43 per cent rating it as somewhat or very ineffective. Many staff interviewed by OIOS reported that decision-making processes often did not result in definitive outcomes and that they received conflicting directives on which programme of work to pursue. For example, a staff member in a regional office reported being told by headquarters managers to pursue work priorities different from those previously agreed upon. Another OHCHR staff member stated that it was not always clear who would take a decision, or when. In addition, interview data reveal that the priority-setting and decision-making processes of OHCHR were perceived as highly competitive, with different offices and functions competing for attention and resources. Finally, OIOS observed that in some cases important decisions on how to implement OHCHR activities occasionally fell to individual, and sometimes inexperienced, OHCHR staff members.

64. OIOS notes staff perceptions that reporting lines and decision-making processes are unclear and are perceived to be resulting in an inefficient use of resources. During interviews, OIOS noted several examples of staff from one branch and division perceiving themselves to have higher workloads than their colleagues in other offices. Respondents to the survey of OHCHR staff gave one of their most negative ratings to the goal of efficient utilization of OHCHR staff and financial resources: 63 per cent considered resources to be ineffectively utilized. The timeliness of staff recruitment was also cited as a major concern, with nearly all respondents (87 per cent) rating this as ineffective. During all six OIOS field visits, field staff reported the lack of sufficient resources to meet workplan demands and the need for improvements in the management by OHCHR of its human resources. Similar concerns were raised by staff in headquarters units. OIOS notes that these perceptions point to the need to provide stronger leadership direction and better communication on the allocation of resources and the priorities and strategic direction of the Office.

Lack of efficient coordination among the operational units of the Office threatens cohesive implementation of its work programme

65. While OIOS found some evidence of strengthened coordination within OHCHR, such as, for example, in support for the work of the Human Rights Council, perceptions of coordination within the Office continue to be poor. OIOS particularly notes the inadequacy of coordination between headquarters and field operations. The need for strengthened coordination within OHCHR was the most common suggestion offered by OHCHR headquarters staff when asked what was needed for the Office to perform more effectively, and more than one half of survey respondents (55 per cent) reported that internal communication was not effective. Many staff cited the lack of regular staff meetings at all levels, from individual teams to the Office as a whole, as evidence of this poor coordination and communication. Staff also pointed to the lack of a common approach and a lack of coherence among the various divisions as further hindering effectiveness. In this regard, they referred to a continued silo mentality as separating the various divisions, and also to the lack of a common and shared Office-wide identity.

Undocumented processes for some critical tasks hamper efficiency

66. Despite recent efforts to strengthen its work processes, OIOS finds that not all key activities being pursued by the Office are supported by consistent and well-documented work methods. OHCHR reports that a set of 10 standard operating procedures was piloted in February 2007 with a view to improving and regularizing the interaction between headquarters and the field, and OIOS commends this effort. However, interviews with both headquarters and field staff indicate that more work needs to be done in this area, and OIOS notes that the need to document work methods for field-based activities is particularly important given the geographical distance between operations and the large degree of diversity in terms of contextual circumstances. Furthermore, only some of the treaty bodies have accompanying manuals that articulate the steps and logistics involved in servicing the body, therefore making it difficult for a new secretary of a body to learn the work involved in his or her role. In addition, while there is an official manual for special procedures and guiding principles on the relationship between the Office and the special mandate holders, as well as an induction kit for new mandate holders, OIOS found that documentation specifically aimed at the staff supporting special mandate

holders was limited. Also, one half of respondents to the survey of special mandate holders reported that they had not been adequately briefed on the work of OHCHR. OIOS notes that inadequate documentation on work processes can result in inefficiencies owing to lost institutional memory and missed opportunities for streamlining work methods.

V. Conclusion

67. OHCHR has an extensive mandate and faces a complex political environment and ever-increasing, occasionally conflicting expectations from the United Nations system and the international community. OIOS finds that, despite its considerable achievements, the Office needs to sharpen its strategic focus and better prioritize its work for greater impact. OIOS concludes that its impact will be greatest if it focuses its activities on the areas in which it has greatest comparative advantage in promoting and protecting human rights, including enhanced monitoring and assessment of the human rights situation around the world, in order to better inform its own strategic decisions. OHCHR is entering a period of consolidation after rapid growth in recent years. It has a recently appointed High Commissioner, committed staff and the goodwill of its partners. OIOS regards this as an opportunity for OHCHR to refocus and build on its unique assets and considerable achievements in order to enhance its effectiveness in the future.

VI. Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Further sharpen the strategic focus of Office

(See finding B, paras. 23-30)

68. In finalizing and implementing the strategic management plan for 2010-2011, OHCHR should further sharpen its strategic focus, identifying organizational priorities and critical activities that will maximize its comparative advantages and lead to more efficient implementation of its mandate. Specifically, OHCHR should:

(a) Identify fewer and more specific planned accomplishments;

(b) Continue to develop clear links among the strategic management plan, the strategic framework and the workplans for its divisions and field presences;

(c) Reassess the current allocation of resources across its divisions, including reviewing the balance of activities among field presences and between headquarters and the field;

(d) Consider ways of improving the monitoring and assessment of the human rights situation around the world in order to better inform its own strategic decisions.

Recommendation 2: Develop an overarching field strategy document

(See finding C, paras. 31-43)

69. OHCHR should, in consultation with partners, develop an overarching field strategy document that takes into account individual field presence strategies, sets

out specific objectives of its field operations and assigns priorities to its key field activities. Specifically, OHCHR should:

(a) Conduct an assessment of the relative advantages and disadvantages of the various types of field presence, paying particular attention to the resource-intensive and sometimes sensitive country office model;

(b) Establish explicit entry and exit criteria;

(c) Provide support from headquarters sufficient to ensure consistency in the nature and content of the advice, resources, tools and information provided to and by staff in the field presences;

(d) Convey this strategy to partner organizations at both the field and headquarters levels to ensure that the objectives and methods of OHCHR field operations are well understood.

Recommendation 3: Improve the effectiveness of work with the human rights bodies

(See finding D, paras. 44-55)

70. OHCHR should improve the effectiveness of its work with the human rights bodies by:

(a) Supporting systematic reporting and follow-up of the recommendations made by the human rights bodies;

(b) Establishing more effective linkages between the work of the human rights bodies and other areas of OHCHR, including the Field Operations and Technical Cooperation Division, and among the human rights bodies themselves.

Recommendation 4: Further strengthen partnerships

(See finding E, paras. 56-60)

71. OHCHR should further strengthen its partnerships by:

(a) Specifying the objectives and modalities for its interactions with partners;

(b) Improving coordination with partners, including governmental entities, entities within the United Nations system and civil society organizations;

(c) Identifying durable links at the organizational level to support partnerships;

(d) Specifying strategies for enhancing mutual complementarities;

(e) Clarifying roles and responsibilities for all partners;

(f) Re-establishing a memorandum of understanding with the United Nations Development Programme.

Recommendation 5: Improve internal coordination and communication

(See finding F, paras. 61-65)

72. OHCHR should improve internal coordination and communication by:

(a) Strengthening links across divisions and branches to ensure a coordinated approach to cross-cutting issues and to ensure that in-house expertise is used to maximum effect;

(b) Enhancing the mechanisms for in-house communication and participation, including, but not limited to, the establishment of regular staff meetings.

Recommendation 6: Identify and document all critical work processes

(See finding F, para. 66)

73. OHCHR should identify all critical work processes that have not yet been documented and take steps to document them. Both headquarters and field presence work processes should be included in this effort and the documentation made available to all relevant staff.

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New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support

New Partnership for Africa's Development: seventh consolidated progress report on implementation and international support

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

In recent years, African countries with the support of the international community have taken several policy actions to implement the sectoral priorities of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and enhance prospects for meeting the Millennium Development Goals. The current report indicates that, despite the global financial and economic crisis and its negative impact, some progress has been achieved in the implementation of NEPAD. The main challenge now for African countries is to ensure that the financial crisis, combined with the latent food and energy crisis, does not reverse the progress made and reduce the risk of increasing poverty and hardship for the most vulnerable groups. In the context of crisis, international cooperation for development is needed. The report calls on international development partners, including the United Nations, to take concerted and urgent action to mitigate the socio-economic impact of the crisis and help African countries recover ground in their progress towards the implementation of NEPAD and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Specifically, donors should deliver on aid commitments as the crisis has reinforced the need to speed up the implementation of key socio-economic development programmes. To allow Africa to maintain its growth momentum and facilitate the implementation of NEPAD projects, development partners should take steps to successfully conclude

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the Doha Round of trade negotiations. These issues are discussed in section II of the report with a focus on the progress made by African countries in the implementation of NEPAD sectoral priorities. Section III of the report illustrates the response by the international community in support of Africa's development, section IV highlights the support provided by the United Nations system and section V contains conclusions and recommendations.

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 63/267 of 31 March 2009, entitled "New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support", the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit a comprehensive report on the implementation of the resolution to the Assembly at its sixty-fourth session. The present report responds to that request.

2. The report highlights the policy measures taken by African countries and organizations in implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), the response of the international community and the support of the United Nations system during the past year. The activities undertaken by the private sector and civil society in support of NEPAD are also highlighted. The report benefited from information provided by Member States, the African Development Bank (AfDB), the NEPAD secretariat, the African Peer Review Mechanism secretariat, and various entities of the United Nations system.

II. Action taken by African countries and organizations

3. The main objective of NEPAD is to generate broad-based and equitable economic growth that allows Africa to reduce poverty and better integrate into the global economy. Translating this vision into action requires the effective implementation of the key sectoral priorities of NEPAD, as discussed below. The past year has witnessed progress in developing sectoral policy frameworks and in implementing specific national or regional programmes and projects.

A. Infrastructure

4. Progress continues to be made in implementing the various components of the NEPAD infrastructure programme. African countries and regional economic communities, in close collaboration with the NEPAD secretariat and AfDB, continue to implement the NEPAD Short-term Action Plan. Since infrastructure plays an important role in facilitating the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals, the twelfth African Union Summit held in February 2009 focused on the theme "Infrastructure development in Africa".

5. Given the need for a comprehensive long-term infrastructural development plan for the continent, the African Union Commission, NEPAD and AfDB have initiated the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa. This development framework will focus on translating sectoral policies into concrete development action plans for the sectors of energy, transport, water and sanitation, and information and communications technology. Efforts are under way to determine the successful bidder to undertake the Programme study, which is expected to be completed by the end of 2010.

6. In a bid to forge closer cooperation between Africa and its development partners, the Infrastructure Consortium for Africa (ICA), at its annual meeting held in Rome in March 2009, deliberated on a number of important issues affecting infrastructural development in Africa, including the global financial crisis. According to a study carried out as part of the World Bank's Africa Infrastructure

Country Diagnostic (AICD) project, an annual outlay of US$ 80 billion is required to close the infrastructure gap. In 2008, commitments by ICA members to infrastructure were estimated at around US$ 13.7 billion, an increase of over 10 per cent from the US$ 12.4 billion committed in 2007. At the ICA meeting, countries members of the Group of Eight reaffirmed their continued commitment to Africa's development agenda.

7. The African Union Commission, working in close collaboration with the NEPAD secretariat and AfDB, has launched a number of quick-win infrastructure priority projects such as the development of regional hydropower projects in response to the energy crisis, and a number of projects concerning transcontinental transport infrastructure, including the missing links in the Trans-African Highway corridors. The process of implementing the recommendations of the study on the missing links in the Dakar-Ndjamena-Djibouti transport corridor has started. The selection process for an engineering firm to execute the project is almost finalized. The feasibility study is expected to be completed early in 2010.

8. In the energy sector, pursuant to a request by the Democratic Republic of the Congo, NEPAD and the power pools, AfDB approved a grant of UA 9.51 million[1] in 2008 to finance a comprehensive study on the development of Inga hydropower sites and associated power interconnections, including updating of the prefeasibility study of the Grand Inga power station, review of the study on the Inga 3 power station, a study on Grand Inga and associated interconnections and an assessment of the social and environmental impacts. Also, African stakeholders continue to implement national and regional water and sanitation priority projects within the framework of the African Water Facility and its operational programme for the period 2005-2009.

9. The NEPAD e-Africa Commission is coordinating the development of the NEPAD ICT broadband infrastructure network in two segments: the Uhurunet submarine cable and the Umojanet terrestrial network. The design of Uhurunet, which is estimated to cost US$ 1.4 billion, provides for the connection of all coastal and island countries in Africa. Uhurunet, which is expected to become operational in 2010, is being developed by a majority-owned African company with shareholding structure comprising a NEPAD special purpose vehicle and African and international investors. Negotiations are expected to result in agreements which would incorporate other initiatives into Uhurunet, such as TEAMS (Kenya) and Seacom on the East Coast, and Main One (Nigeria) and Africa Coast to Europe (ACE) on the West Coast. The project incorporates open-access principles and does not give preferential treatment to any country. A detailed feasibility study of part of Umojanet, which covers terrestrial networks in Eastern and Southern Africa, was completed in April 2009. The outcome and recommendations of the report will form the basis of a project information memorandum which will be presented to prospective shareholders in the special purpose vehicle that will own the terrestrial network. A similar study will be undertaken for countries in West, Central and North Africa.

[1] The financial statements of the African Development Bank are expressed in units of account (UA). The unit of account has been valued as equivalent to one special drawing right (SDR).

B. Agriculture and food security

10. In 2008 and 2009, good progress was made in implementing the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP). The Programme has moved from strategy to action, and the thirteenth African Union Summit held in Sirte, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, in July 2009, focused on the theme "Investing in agriculture for economic growth and food security".

11. During the period under review, the NEPAD secretariat stepped up its interaction with the CAADP country round-table processes. The NEPAD secretariat, in collaboration with the regional economic communities, supported countries in incorporating the CAADP agenda into their agriculture and rural development programmes in order to fast track implementation. NEPAD support to country round-table activities focused on ensuring that countries had access to expert knowledge and resources for CAADP implementation. As of December 2008, more than 12 countries were moving towards a CAADP compact. Malawi, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Uganda and Zambia are expected to sign their compacts in 2009. Ghana, Mali, the Niger, Senegal and Togo have each started the round-table process. By means of the round-table meetings, countries identify their needs and mobilize the resources to fund investments in their agricultural sector.

12. In May 2008, the NEPAD secretariat, with the support of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Bank, brought together in Pretoria representatives of countries hardest hit by the rising food prices and key development partners. Countries and partners, including various United Nations agencies, came up with an action plan for both immediate responses and longer-term solutions. A task force led by the African Union and the NEPAD secretariat, supported by various United Nations entities and regional economic communities, followed up the action plan through backstopping missions. In Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, the Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Swaziland, Uganda and Zambia, the missions worked with development partners to put in place short-term interventions, as well as the medium-term road map for accelerating the CAADP round-table process.

13. Through the commitments of African Governments and the support of development partners, the response to the round-table initiative has helped to mobilize resources for the above-mentioned interventions. In this regard, AfDB has approved more than US$ 700 million in the 2008-2009 biennium for efforts aimed at curbing the high food prices. As long-term measures, AfDB plans to increase water storage capacity, develop irrigation and reduce post-harvest losses. In 2008, the World Bank provided a package of over US$ 200 million for high-priority countries in Africa. Partners have however, been concerned with addressing the root causes of the crisis with longer-term measures, implemented under the CAADP umbrella. Norway committed US$ 4 million in 2008/09 for conservation agriculture as a medium-term response to the food crisis. A joint programme of the African Union, NEPAD and FAO will scale up conservation agriculture in Kenya, Lesotho, Mozambique, Swaziland, the United Republic of Tanzania, Uganda and Zimbabwe, reaching over 23,000 households. These responses from development partners parallel the increasing support from the international community to transform African agriculture through CAADP.

C. Health

14. Significant developments continue to be registered in the health sector, in line with the NEPAD and African Union health strategies. In particular, the NEPAD has continued its advocacy role, mainly through publications and presentations. One particular effort in the health sector focuses on enhancing synergies among global health initiatives on specific diseases. Moreover, efforts are being made to make health development aid more effective and to strengthen technical support for health systems that build African capacity.

15. A programme for strengthening the regulation and harmonization of medicines is well under way. A successful continental workshop was held in April 2009, with the involvement of the regional economic communities. Those communities are currently being supported in preparing project proposals aimed at enabling regional cooperation among African regulatory authorities through a community-driven process. The programme offers much learning as regards the roles of regional economic communities and how to deal with challenges, including membership of multiple regional economic communities. This project will be complemented by a project on the transfer of technology in pharmaceuticals manufacturing, in line with the African Union pharmaceuticals plan.

16. The NEPAD secretariat co-hosted its fourth one-month course for district health managers from countries members of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), with participants from Botswana, Lesotho and Malawi. The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), with the technical support of the University of Pretoria has been sponsoring the course since its inception. The NEPAD secretariat continues to seek support with a view to offering these courses in Central, East and West Africa. A knowledge paper on skill mix, an issue critical for Africa, has been completed in collaboration with the International Centre on Human Resources for Nursing.

17. The NEPAD secretariat is deeply involved in streamlining the registration of medicines to bring about more rapid access to quality medicines on the continent, especially as more new medicines emerge. This process, funded by the Gates Foundation, is aimed at enabling the regional economic communities to build their capacity in that regard. Capacity-building is also at the centre of an initiative undertaken in cooperation with the Council on Health Research for Development on strengthening national health research systems.

D. Education and training

18. In the past year, further progress has been made in the implementation of various education projects in a number of countries under the auspices of the regional economic communities. In June 2008, the NEPAD secretariat hosted in Pretoria an African Union workshop of experts and partners to finalize a strategy for teacher development, to be implemented during the Second Decade of Education for Africa. The meeting focused on two areas namely, teaching of science, mathematics and technology, and the use of open and distance learning for teacher development. Five member countries of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) have been identified for the implementation of this project, namely, Benin, Ghana, the Niger, Nigeria and Senegal. In the Community of Sahel-Saharan

States (CEN-SAD), negotiations are under way for the implementation of the teacher development project in five countries: Egypt, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia. Preparations are under way to negotiate with the Libyan Government with a view to it becoming the anchor country in the implementation of the project.

19. The NEPAD secretariat continues to focus on African centres of excellence through the review of case studies under the Regional Centres of Excellence in Education programme. Similarly, a proposal has been prepared for the Government of Gabon for the establishment of a steering committee, a technical committee and a scientific committee which will drive the process for the establishment of a centre of excellence for the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), through the NEPAD Centre for Mathematics, Science and Technology Education. The major objective of this project is to facilitate the development of a framework for the establishment of regional centres of excellence.

20. At the pre-national conference indaba (dialogue) held in Midrand, South Africa, in October 2008, representatives of higher education institutions, relevant civil society organizations and non-governmental organizations reviewed a concept paper on the national, subregional and continental dialogue on education and culture proposed for 2009. As a build-up to the national conference, NEPAD organized a symposium and cultural event to celebrate Africa Day, under the theme "Unifying Africa through education and culture". Moreover, a major project has been launched in the SADC subregion to revitalize and locate education and culture, through national, regional and continental conferences and engagements.

21. Human resource development initiatives for nurses and midwives in Africa are gathering momentum. The major objective of this initiative is to enhance the professional skills of nurses and midwives by providing post-graduate programmes to universities that do not currently have such programmes. The curriculum at three host universities has been approved and students have registered for the programme, which will cover community health, maternal and child health, and mental health care.

22. A project on literacy for development in Africa and CEN-SAD has been initiated. The major objective of this project is to identify countries in need of literacy assistance and to develop strategies for intervention. Negotiations are under way for the implementation of a literacy project for CEN-SAD member countries. Negotiations will be held with the Government of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya with a view to it becoming the anchor country in the implementation of the project.

E. Environment

23. Progress continues to be made in the implementation of the NEPAD subregional environmental action plans adopted by the environment ministers of the five subregions (Central, East, North, Southern and West Africa) in June 2008. The NEPAD secretariat has undertaken extensive advocacy work with regional economic communities, United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations to support the implementation of the African Union-NEPAD environment initiative and the subregional action plans.

24. The past year has seen progress in the implementation of the Climate for Development in Africa (ClimDev Africa) programme by the African Union Commission, in collaboration with the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and AfDB. The aim of the programme is to improve analytical capacity and knowledge management in areas related to climate change. With initial funding from the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID), the Africa Climate Policy Centre (ACPC) has been established as the policy arm of ClimDev Africa. Activities being undertaken in 2009 include the recruitment of core staff, the creation of a website, the establishment of a database climate change activities and the provision of support to Africa's negotiating capacity. Establishment of the ClimDev Africa Special Fund is also at an advanced stage, with a start-up grant from DFID to finance institutional set-up activities and AfDB providing resources to finance country operations.

25. In the area of disaster risk reduction, the NEPAD secretariat and the African Union Commission, with the support of the secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, are reviewing the implementation of the African Regional Strategy for Disaster Reduction and updating the relevant African Union programme of action. In this regard, the Second African Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction has been organized, and a revision and adaptation of an expanded programme of action (2009-2015) for the implementation of the African Regional Strategy has been initiated.

26. International climate change negotiations have particular relevance for Africa, considering the continent's vulnerability to such change. African ministers of environment have adopted a common platform in preparation for the upcoming global climate change negotiations in Copenhagen in December 2009. For the development of the common platform, a special session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) was held in Nairobi, in May 2009, at which the Nairobi Declaration on Climate was signed by the Governments of more than 30 African countries. The Declaration states that increased support should be based on the continent's priorities, which include mitigation and adaptation, capacity-building, financing, and development and transfer of technology, while African countries should implement climate change programmes that help to achieve development and attain the Millennium Development Goals.

27. Another major activity undertaken during the past year was the setting up of the climate change task team on the implementation of African Union and AMCEN decisions on climate change, under the AMCEN presidency. In cooperation with the AMCEN presidency and secretariat, programmes were implemented to support African climate change negotiators in reaching agreement on an African negotiating position beyond 2012, and to develop a comprehensive framework of African climate change programmes.

F. Information and communications technology

28. The past year has seen further progress in implementing the various components of the NEPAD e-Schools Initiative, aimed at equipping primary and secondary school students with the skills and knowledge to participate effectively in the global information society and knowledge economy.

29. The e-Africa Commission of NEPAD has been overseeing the e-Schools Demonstration Project (Demo) whereby, in collaboration with Governments and private sector consortia, six NEPAD e-Schools are to be set up in each of 16 African countries, namely, Algeria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Egypt, Gabon, Ghana, Lesotho, Kenya, Mali, Mauritius, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa and Uganda. Good progress has been achieved, with Demo launched in 10 countries and equipment in place in the 16 aforementioned countries; more than 80 schools have been successfully connected. Lessons learned from monitoring and evaluation activities carried out by the Commonwealth of Learning, in collaboration with the Information for Development Programme (InfoDev), will inform the roll out of NEPAD e-Schools.

30. The Government of South Africa funded the development of the NEPAD e-Schools business plan which incorporates guidelines for good practice in the development of NEPAD e-Schools and also country strategies for the 16 countries involved in the Demo project. The business plan, developed by Ernst & Young and Neil Butcher & Associates, was endorsed by a stakeholder conference held in Johannesburg, South Africa, in April 2008 as broad framework for the roll out of NEPAD e-Schools.

31. Other important components of the e-Schools initiative include the development of educational content, the professional development of teachers and school administrators, the establishment of a satellite network to facilitate Internet access, especially for rural and remote schools, and the establishment of national implementing agencies to facilitate the roll out of the e-Schools. The NEPAD e-Schools Group of Experts was formed during a workshop at the e-Learning Africa 2009 Conference held in Dakar in May 2009. The focus for 2009 is the professional development of teachers. The NEPAD e-Africa Commission, in collaboration with Intel Corporation, convened a workshop in South Africa in June 2009 to train 24 trainers of trainers from 13 African countries, with the professional development of teachers taking part in the NEPAD e-Schools Initiative as the objective.

G. Science and technology

32. Progress was made in implementing the programmes of Africa's Consolidated Science and Technology Plan of Action: African Biosciences Initiative, and in establishing a high-level African panel on biotechnology, the African Water Sciences and Technology Network, the African Energy Research and Innovation (AERI) Network, and the African Science, Technology and Innovation Indicators (ASTII) initiative.

33. The African Biosciences Initiative is implemented through four regional networks of laboratories and technoparks which are involved in carrying out cutting-edge research and development and transferring bioscience technologies to other laboratories. The Initiative continued to offer opportunities to African institutions and young scientists in regard to state-of-the-art research and study for postgraduate degrees in life science in African universities. The Southern African Network for Biosciences continued to focus on validating treatment remedies for opportunistic infections affecting people living with HIV/AIDS, while the Biosciences Eastern and Central Africa Network continued its work on the development of biotechnological tools to control bacterial disease in bananas. The

West African Biosciences Network continued to engage in the inventory and characterization of sorghum genetic resources, while the North African Biosciences Network continued to concentrate on the production of elite biofortified Northern African barley genotypes.

34. As mentioned in the sixth progress report (A/64/204), the work of the NEPAD African Biosafety Network of Expertise complements ongoing activities under the African Biosciences Initiative so that technological innovation goes hand in hand with ensuring the safety of humans and the environment. The Water Research Commission of South Africa, subcontracted by the NEPAD secretariat with a grant from France, is providing technical expertise in the preparation of a business plan and the identification of the centres that will constitute the proposed African Water Sciences and Technology Network.

35. In the area of African science, technology and innovation indicators, the NEPAD secretariat, with financial support from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, is implementing the African Science, Technology and Innovation Indicators (ASTII) initiative. A series of memorandums of understanding and agreements have been signed to advance the development and implementation of the programme.

H. Gender mainstreaming, empowerment of women and civil society participation

36. Strategies, tools and approaches to gender mainstreaming within NEPAD sectoral strategies and at the regional economic community level have been under development since 2004. The NEPAD secretariat continues to collaborate with the African Union Commission to ensure that the policies and guidelines developed by the Commission are implemented within NEPAD priority sectors and at the regional economic community level. Some countries have been striving to achieve better economic and political governance and accountability as an essential precondition for achieving gender equality. The African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) is striving to enhance women's human rights through the application of the social development indicators included in the peer review of the performance of States in respect of good governance. The participation of civil society in the NEPAD agenda is at present effective; for example, civil society organizations have become an integral part of the in-country APRM assessment process.

37. Progress has been made in the implementation of the NEPAD Spanish Fund for African Women Empowerment. The Fund, financially supported by Spain, remains aimed at promoting gender equality and empowering women by providing them with the financial resources to unlock their economic potential, fight poverty, create wealth and contribute to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The Fund will disburse €10 million over a period of five years to various projects in Africa. Between August 2008 and April 2009, the Fund disbursed grants of €6.3 million to 77 projects in 26 countries. The projects focus on such issues as the development of small and medium-sized enterprises, microcredit, agroprocessing, vocational skills training, agriculture, the promotion of human rights and the participation of women in environmental management.

38. The Fund is now working with two regional economic communities, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and ECOWAS, to

implement a three-year, €2 million pilot project which involves the creation of business incubator services for women entrepreneurs. Kenya and Sierra Leone have been selected as pilot host countries. To assess the progress being made by the various funded projects, the NEPAD secretariat carried out field missions to eight countries: Burundi, the Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Rwanda and Uganda. Key output achievements of the Fund include training in vocational skills, gender-based violence awareness and prevention, training in entrepreneurship skills, and training of community educators on HIV/AIDS.

I. African Peer Review Mechanism

39. There has been steady progress in moving the peer review process forward. As of July 2009, 30 countries have acceded to APRM, namely, Algeria, Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Djibouti, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mozambique, Nigeria, the Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, the Sudan, the United Republic of Tanzania, Togo, Uganda and Zambia.

40. Significant progress has also been made in the peer review process: in 2008, four countries (Benin, Uganda, Nigeria and Burkina Faso) were peer reviewed and, in 2009, three countries (Mali, Mozambique and Lesotho) have been peer reviewed, bringing the number of countries so reviewed to 12. Ethiopia and the United Republic of Tanzania have submitted their country self-assessment reports and national programmes of action, thereby paving the way for the fielding of their country review missions in the near future.

41. At the extraordinary summit meeting of the African Peer Review Forum, held in Cotonou in October 2008, it was forecast that if the momentum were maintained, it would be possible to peer review the remaining countries between 2009 and 2013. Moreover, if all of the other 24 African countries were to decide to join APRM before 2013, it is highly probable that the entire membership of the African Union could be peer reviewed by 2020. This, however, would require more determined effort at the national level, where the country self-assessments have to be undertaken. The Forum also deliberated on selected cross-cutting issues encountered so far in the peer review process, namely, managing diversity and xenophobia, elections in Africa, land resource management and corruption.

42. A training workshop on enhancing the role and effective participation of parliamentarians in the peer review process was held in Dar es Salaam, United Republic of Tanzania, in November 2008. The workshop was aimed at ensuring the effective participation of parliamentarians in peer review processes at the national level, thereby ensuring the transparency and credibility of the process as a whole, and at improving their oversight of the implementation of their respective national plans of action. At the tenth ordinary summit meeting of the African Peer Review Forum, held in Addis Ababa in January 2009, Algeria, Rwanda and South Africa presented their respective national plans of action to the African Peer Review Panel. Benin presented its first annual report, while Uganda submitted its semi-annual progress report on the implementation of its plan of action.

43. To date, over US$ 13 million has been mobilized by the APRM secretariat. In addition, the European Union is contributing €2.3 million. The APRM Trust Fund

has funded activities in support of Panel operations, the APRM secretariat staff, preparatory processes (including the country support mission), country review missions, experience-sharing workshops, and monitoring and oversight. The term of the current Trust Fund agreement will end in September 2009.

III. Response of the international community: building on the momentum of international support for Africa's development

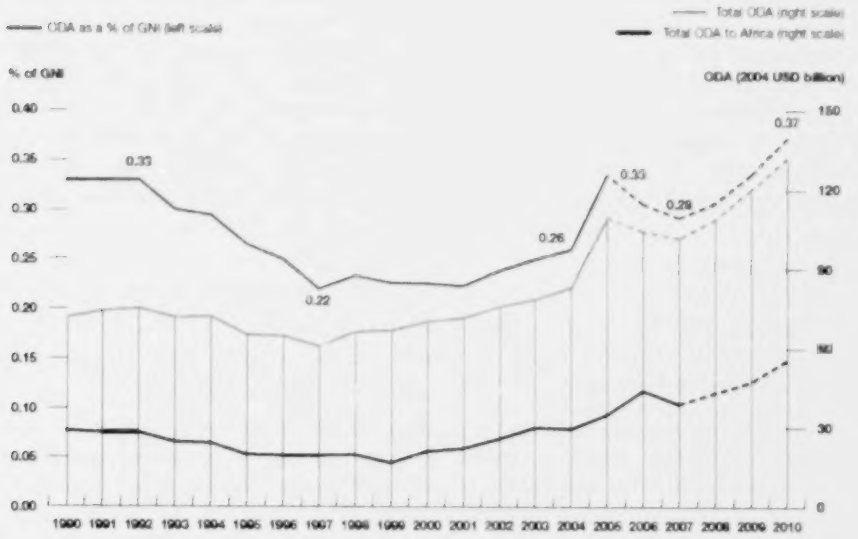
44. The slowdown in economic growth in Africa sets back progress on poverty reduction, implementation of NEPAD sectoral priorities and attainment of the Millennium Development Goals. Against this background, the Group of Twenty, at the London Summit in April 2009, reaffirmed its commitment to meeting the Millennium Development Goals and to achieving its official development assistance (ODA) pledges, including the commitments made in relation to Aid for Trade and debt relief and those made at Gleneagles in 2005, especially in respect of Africa. In addition, the Group made a commitment to provide US$ 50 billion annually to support social protection, boost trade and safeguard development in low-income countries, to support a substantial increase in lending to multilateral banks and to double the International Monetary Fund (IMF) concessional lending capacity for low-income countries. The Group of Twenty is making available resources for social protection for the poorest countries, including through investment in long-term food security and through voluntary bilateral contributions to the World Bank's vulnerability framework. Prior to the London Summit, the European Union had reaffirmed its commitment to achieving its overall ODA targets, and its commitment to channelling to Africa at least 50 per cent of the increase in its collective aid.

45. At the summit meeting held in L'Aquila in July 2009, the Group of Eight reiterated the commitments made at Gleneagles and more recently at the London Summit regarding support for African efforts towards promoting development and good governance, achieving the Millennium Development Goals and maintaining ODA flows. Furthermore, the members of the Group of Eight committed US$ 20 billion over three years to supporting rural development in poor countries and agreed to keep agriculture at the core of the international agenda. In following up the Monterrey Consensus and Accra Agenda for Action, the Group of Eight decided to promote a comprehensive whole-of-country approach, which would allow for stronger policy coherence. A first accountability report is expected to be submitted to the Group of Eight at its meeting to be held in Muskoka, Canada, in June 2010.

A. Official development assistance

46. According to the preliminary estimates of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), net global ODA from members of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) rose in 2008 to US$ 119.8 billion, representing an increase of 10.2 per cent in real terms (see figure below).

Net official development assistance from members of the Development Assistance Committee, 1990-2007, and the Development Assistance Committee secretariat simulations, 2008 and 2010



Source: OECD Development Assistance Committee, *Development Co-operation Report, 2009*.

47. According to OECD preliminary estimates, aid to Africa increased in cash terms from US$ 29.5 billion in 2004 to US$ 42 billion in 2008. Yet, Africa has received only about 31 per cent (US$ 12.5 billion) of the total (US$ 40 billion) cash increase in ODA since 2004, way below the 50 per cent assumption implied by the Gleneagles estimate of US$ 25 billion.

48. The DAC secretariat has calculated that delivering the Gleneagles estimate of an additional US$ 25 billion a year (unadjusted for lower gross national income) would require ODA to Africa to rise to US$ 55 billion at 2004 prices, or to US$ 66 billion at 2008 prices in 2010. Given the preliminary estimate for 2008 of US$ 42 billion, this implies that Africa would need to receive an additional US$ 24 billion, or virtually all of the increase in ODA required over the next two years (from US$ 120 billion to US$ 145 billion), to meet existing commitments. Significant growth in aid, to the tune of 25 per cent per year, will be needed in 2009 and 2010 to meet donor commitments to provide to Africa by 2010 an additional US$ 25 billion in aid per year, at 2004 prices.

49. While the gap between aid commitment and delivery was large even before the onset of the global financial and economic crisis, the crisis has jeopardized the fulfilment of the commitments in terms of amounts. The financial crisis could, however, give rise to new motivation for governmental efforts to improve aid effectiveness, as expressed in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and in the Accra Agenda for Action, in which developed and developing countries agreed in September 2008 to take bold steps to reform the way aid is delivered and spent. In the Accra Agenda for Action, developing countries made the commitment to take

control of their own future, donors to coordinate better among themselves, and both parties pledged to be accountable to each other.

50. Some of the key points agreed to in the Accra Agenda for Action are (a) predictability of aid: donors will provide to partner countries regular and timely information on their rolling three to five-year forward expenditures and/or implementation plans; (b) country systems: partner country systems will be used to deliver aid as the first option, rather than donor systems; (c) conditionality: donors will switch from reliance on prescriptive conditions about how and when aid money is spent to conditions based on the developing country's own development objectives; and (d) untying of aid: donors will relax restrictions that prevent developing countries from choosing the suppliers of their goods and services.

B. Debt relief

51. The past year has seen continued progress in debt relief efforts within the framework of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative and the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative (MDRI), as well as bilateral debt relief.

52. Burundi reached the completion point under the HIPC Initiative in January 2009. Thus, as of June 2009, 20 African countries had reached the completion point under the HIPC Initiative and had therefore also benefited from debt relief through MDRI. In addition, Togo and Côte d'Ivoire reached the HIPC decision point in November 2008 and March 2009 respectively, bringing to nine the number of African countries which have done so and which are receiving interim debt relief. Four additional African countries have met the income and indebtedness criteria for HIPC but have not yet reached the HIPC decision point.

53. The current global economic and financial crisis is threatening to undermine recent gains in debt sustainability. According to the 2009 DATA report,[2] 11 of the 20 African countries which have reached the completion point under the HIPC Initiative are now facing high to moderate risk of debt distress through debt reaccumulation. Debt sustainability of post-completion point countries is threatened by shocks, particularly those that affect exports, and is highly sensitive to the terms of new financing. In some countries, debt relief is counterbalanced by increasing private debt. Furthermore, in recent years, a number of countries (e.g., China and India) have emerged as new creditors to African countries. While this development increases the availability of resources for development financing, there is a need to ensure that the activities of these new creditors do not undermine debt sustainability in Africa.

54. Another challenge is to ensure that heavily indebted poor countries receive full debt relief from all of their creditors, including smaller multilateral creditors, non-Paris Club official bilateral creditors and commercial creditors which together account for about 25 per cent of total cost of the HIPC Initiative. Moreover, vulture fund litigation has become a serious problem which can potentially undermine the gains made through debt relief in several African countries.

[2] Available from http://www.one.org/international/datareport2009/.

C. Foreign direct investment

55. In 2007, the year for which the most up-to-date data are available for Africa, foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows to the continent grew by 16 per cent, to reach US$ 53 billion. According to data compiled by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, despite the slowdown in global economic growth, FDI flows to the continent were expected to have grown to more than US$ 60 billion in 2008. This trend has, however, changed due to the global economic recession, tighter credit conditions, falling corporate profits and gloomy prospects for global economic growth.

56. The growth of FDI inflows to Africa was spread across 35 countries, including many of the natural resource producers that have been attracting direct investment in the past few years, as well as new host countries. The distribution of the inflows changed slightly, with North Africa attracting 42 per cent of FDI to the region in 2007 compared with 51 per cent per cent in 2006, and sub-Saharan Africa attracting 58 per cent, up from 49 per cent in 2006. While most countries of North Africa continued to attract FDI, large inflows to Nigeria and South Africa, combined with good performance in Equatorial Guinea, Madagascar and Zambia — each receiving about US$ 1 billion or more in FDI inflows in 2007 — boosted overall FDI flows to sub-Saharan Africa.

57. The NEPAD secretariat has scaled up its work on promoting an investment-friendly continent through the NEPAD-OECD Africa Investment Initiative, which aims to foster sustainable growth, employment creation and poverty reduction by advancing private sector development in African countries. The annual high-level meeting of the Initiative, held in Kampala in December 2008, focused on the theme "Advancing investment policy reform in Africa". The Initiative's targets include improving the capacity of African countries to strengthen the investment environment for growth and development, taking advantage of the OECD peer learning method and investment instruments of cooperation, such as the OECD Policy Framework for Investment which is the most comprehensive multilaterally backed investment policy instrument.

D. Trade

58. Over the past year, there has been limited progress in reaching an agreement on issues affecting Africa in the Doha Round of trade negotiations. OECD member countries continue their distorting trade policies, to the disadvantage of African farmers and agroproducers. It is therefore crucial that the Doha Round be concluded, especially in the light of the global financial and economic crisis. At the London Summit in April 2009, countries members of the Group of Twenty reaffirmed their commitments in respect of Aid for Trade, especially to sub-Saharan Africa.

59. In 2008, a road map was adopted with the objective of providing a comprehensive analysis of the results of Aid for Trade programmes at the national and subregional levels. An annotated version of the road map was presented in February 2009. The African working group on Aid for Tradç, comprising AfDB, ECA and the World Trade Organization, has been leading the implementation of the initiative at the continental level. The group has been working on such issues as

identifying bankable regional and national projects in the priority areas of infrastructure, trade facilitation and standards, in coordination with the regional economic communities and individual countries. Challenges, however, continue to hinder trade in Africa, such as supply side constraints and low levels of subregional and continental trade integration. According to the World Bank, losses in world trade have cost Africa almost US$ 70 billion a year, owing to lack of product diversification and shrinking market shares for traditional goods.

60. Some progress has been made in negotiations on economic partnership agreements between the European Union and the six regional clusters of African countries. As of January 2009, economic partnership agreements are undertaken multilaterally with SADC, the Eastern African Community (EAC), and Eastern and Southern Africa, and undertaken bilaterally with three African countries, namely, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana. Based on the most recent data provided by the European Commission, the European Union and West African countries are expected to conclude a regional agreement on trade in goods and development cooperation, which will open the way to a comprehensive agreement between the European Union and 16 African countries by October 2009.

61. In 2008, the European Union negotiated a number of economic partnership agreements to replace the system of trade preferences under the Cotonou trade regime. In Central Africa, an interim agreement was concluded with Cameroon. In Southern Africa, a regional agreement was agreed with Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia and Swaziland. In West Africa, the European Union reached individual agreements with Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana. In East Africa, a regional agreement was agreed with EAC (Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda). In Eastern and Southern Africa, regional agreements were agreed with Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius, Seychelles, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The European Union aims to conclude full regional economic partnership agreements which will take into account any issues set out in the interim agreements that partners may want to re-examine.

E. South-South cooperation

62. In recent years, emerging countries such as Brazil, India and, especially, China have been increasingly involved in investment, trade and the extraction of natural resources in Africa. South-South cooperation is beginning to provide larger amounts of resources for development, particularly in the productive sectors and in infrastructure, and has helped to accelerate world trade and FDI flows in Africa. The Doha Declaration on Financing for Development,[3] adopted in December 2008, recognized that South-South cooperation complemented North-South cooperation and acknowledged the role played by middle-income developing countries as providers and recipients of development assistance.

63. In October 2008, the sixth Meeting of Senior Officials of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) was convened in Cairo, with the aim of reviving the outcomes of the FOCAC Beijing Summit and Beijing Action Plan (2007-2009). Eight action areas were defined to reinforce political cooperation between China and Africa: increasing assistance and investment, cancelling debts, exempting

[3] General Assembly resolution 63/239, annex.

tariffs, establishing the China-Africa Development Fund, building economic and trade cooperation zones and increasing China-Africa cooperation in social development. Aid provided by China in 2007 was estimated at US$ 1.4 billion.

64. Following the India-Africa Forum Summit held in New Delhi in April 2008, a framework to elaborate strong economic cooperation was established around eight areas: agricultural development, political cooperation, science and technology, social development, tourism, infrastructure, energy and environment, media and communication. A plan of action and implementation mechanism was to be put together within one year. India pledged a US$ 5.4 billion credit line for African countries over the next five years and US$ 500 million in ODA.

65. The first Turkey-Africa Cooperation Summit was held in Istanbul in August 2008 to discuss trade and investment relations with African countries. Trade and investment have both shown dramatic growth in the past few years, with Africa representing an important market for Turkish businesses. Furthermore, Turkey has formalized relations with the African Union and AfDB, and in 2007 provided about US$ 500 million in aid. In October 2008, the Ministerial Conference on Economic Cooperation between the Republic of Korea and Africa allowed for the discussion of key economic development issues and the sharing of economic development experience. The Republic of Korea has provided over US$ 500 million in aid.

66. Brazil and other middle-income countries are intensifying their relations with African countries at both an economic and diplomatic level. Brazil provided technical support in the areas of electoral assistance, peacebuilding, energy, and information and communications technologies, and serves as general coordinator on behalf of South America at the South America-Africa summit meetings. The Second South America-Africa Summit will be held in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela in September 2009 with the aim of assessing the progress made in the implementation of the joint initiative of the African Union and the South American Community of Nations in science and technology. Participants in the second South-South High-Level Meeting on Oil and Gas Management, held in Damascus in June 2009, discussed priority topics, the establishment of a network of new and existing oil and gas-producing States and shared experiences.

IV. Support provided by the United Nations system

67. Support provided by the United Nations system agencies and organizations is an important pillar in international support for the implementation of NEPAD and ranges from advocacy and institutional support to technical assistance and capacity-building. The most recent annual report submitted by the Secretary-General to the Committee on Programme and Coordination on United Nations system support for NEPAD (E/AC.51/2009/7), contains detailed information on the nature and scope of the support provided by the United Nations system in the past year.

A. Strengthening of the Regional Consultation Mechanism of United Nations Agencies and Organizations Working in Africa in Support of the African Union and its NEPAD programme and the cluster system

68. The past year has seen further progress in enhancing the support provided by the United Nations system to the African Union and its NEPAD programme. In September 2008, ECA convened a review meeting in Addis Ababa on measures to enhance the United Nations Regional Coordination Mechanism in Support of the African Union and its NEPAD Programme. The conclusions of the background report and the meeting fed into the discussions and recommendations of the ninth annual meeting of the Regional Consultation Mechanism. Both meetings noted increased and high-level participation of United Nations system agencies in the work of the Mechanism. Furthermore, the United Nations system has deepened its partnerships with the African Union Commission, the NEPAD secretariat, AfDB and the regional economic communities. The representatives of these organizations participate on a regular basis in the work of the Regional Consultation Mechanism.

69. At the ninth annual meeting of the Regional Consultation Mechanism, enhanced coherence, harmonization and synergy of policies and activities was recognized as central to the effectiveness of the cluster system. It was emphasized that cluster activities should be guided by the priorities and strategic plans of the African Union Commission, the NEPAD secretariat and the regional economic communities. Lack of financial and human resources specifically allocated to cluster activities was highlighted as a constraint which hampered the planning and implementation of joint activities. Also highlighted at the ninth meeting was the need to reconcile the different priorities of cluster members with the priorities of the Regional Consultation Mechanism, and to strengthen monitoring and evaluation of United Nations system support to the African Union and its NEPAD programme.

70. In response to the changing global socio-economic context, current and emerging priority issues related to Africa's development are also discussed at the meetings of the Regional Consultation Mechanism. At the ninth annual meeting, such issues included a coordinated multisectoral response to the food crisis challenge in Africa and United Nations support to climate-related actions at the regional level. United Nations agencies were urged to develop joint interventions in response to food crisis, building upon CAADP and other existing initiatives. With regard to climate change, it was agreed that the environment, population and urbanization cluster would take the lead in preparing a business plan on the basis of the ongoing work of ECA on the ClimDev Africa programme.

71. At the same time, the inter-agency task force on Africa, convened by the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa at United Nations Headquarters, has provided an effective platform for the agencies of the United Nations system to share expertise and experience, as well as organize joint activities. In particular, the task force has been active in supporting the preparations for and follow-up to the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on Africa's development needs, held on 22 September 2008, including the organization of 15 side events and the preparation of the background report for the meeting.

B. Millennium Villages

72. The Millennium Villages Project is a holistic, community-led development initiative that reaches more than half a million people across 15 countries in sub-Saharan Africa. Some of the accomplishments to date include a doubling of average staple crop yields to help reduce hunger; dramatic increases in primary school enrolment, including in the enrolment of girls; rapid expansion of the school meals programme to 80,000 students; dramatic reductions in malaria prevalence; and more than doubling of the number of women receiving antenatal care and having supervised deliveries.

73. Since most of the existing Millennium Village sites have now completed three years of the first five-year phase of activity, they are focusing on mechanisms to ensure the sustainability of progress. In the second five-year phase, there will be an increased focus on income-generation opportunities, capitalizing on the strong advances made in the first phase in agriculture, health, education and infrastructure.

74. Based on the successes of the Millennium Villages, many countries have indicated strong interest in applying the lessons learned to broader, national efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, including area-based approaches and sector-specific programmes for agriculture, health and infrastructure. Mali has presented a Millennium Village-inspired strategy which will reach two million people across the country. Nigeria is in part drawing on the successes of the Millennium Villages to expand community development programmes through local governments. Many other countries have reported strong demand for launching Millennium Villages in new locations throughout sub-Saharan Africa.

V. Conclusions and recommendations

75. **The past year has witnessed progress in the implementation of NEPAD projects and in moving forward the African Peer Review Mechanism, as well as an increase in ODA. Since African countries are increasingly affected by the recession, the momentum in the implementation of NEPAD could be delayed or even stopped. To prevent either outcome, African countries and their development partners should both take urgent and bold policy measures with short and long-term objectives.**

76. **As the process of integrating the NEPAD secretariat into the structures and processes of the African Union Commission is well under way, African countries should develop an effective and continent-wide communication and outreach strategy that will enhance awareness of the objectives and goals of NEPAD. In this regard, there is a need to strengthen the participation of the private sector and civil society in the implementation of NEPAD.**

77. **In accordance with the Nairobi Declaration on the African Process for Combating Climate Change, adopted by the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment on 29 May 2009, African countries should develop an African common position in their negotiations on climate change agreements beyond 2012, reflecting their need to implement and finance climate mitigation and adaptation strategies. Countries should also maintain their efforts to mainstream environmental and climate change policy into all productive**

sectors. In addressing climate change-related issues in Africa, donors need to commit new resources.

78. In adopting fiscal stimulus policies to mitigate the socio-economic impact of the current crisis, African countries need to continue prudent borrowing policies and further strengthen their capacity to manage external debt. Also, as most sources of external development finance (remittances, export and commodity earnings, trade finance, aid and capital flows) are adversely affected by the global financial crisis, African countries should implement policies to further mobilize domestic financial resources.

79. While various multilateral and bilateral debt reduction initiatives have lowered the debt-servicing costs of many African countries, the current crisis could jeopardize their debt sustainability or reduce their resource mobilization capacity. To maintain the fragile debt sustainability of many African countries, commercial creditors should honour their debt relief commitments under the HIPC Initiative.

80. Regional integration serves as a stepping stone for building markets and developing strong economies. In the context of South-South cooperation, African countries should continue to share best practices to strengthen regional integration.

81. In the context of the global recession and the substantial decline in international trade, development partners should take bold steps to reach a successful conclusion of the Doha Round of trade negotiations with development dimensions as this would reduce trade distortion, increase international trade and potentially enhance growth prospects.

82. African countries need to develop strategies that boost trade, pursue domestic trade policy reforms that support international rule setting and increase their capacities in order to strengthen their participation in the Doha Round.

83. African countries need to expand infrastructure (ports, road networks), energy resources, water resources, conveyance systems, and research and extension services, which can help to lower the costs of investing in agriculture.

84. Development partners need to align their efforts more specifically towards CAADP, the round tables and the compact so that all of the pillars are funded and recognized as key entry points for genuine internal and external investment.

85. While donors are increasing their support for infrastructural projects, they should also sustain the level of investment in health and basic education. In the current context, there is a strong need to strengthen key programmes in health and education, such as the control of major diseases, including HIV/AIDS and malaria, and the Fast Track Initiative in education.

86. With the growing role played by non-traditional donors and private sector actors within the new aid architecture, there is a need to improve the availability of data on aid from different sources and to enhance aid coordination and alignment. Donors should increase aid disbursement significantly in 2009 and 2010 in order to maintain their commitments to provide to Africa by 2010 an additional US$ 25 billion in ODA per year, at 2004 prices.